THE POWER OF AN ENDLESS LIFE

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BY

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PREFACE.

ONLY the kind insistence of friends, and more particularly of one friend, whose judgment I have learnt more and more to trust, and to whom I desire to dedicate this little volume, leads me to add to the many books that clamor for our time. Without any thought of more than a possible and passing interest in the form of the message, it is the earnest hope that some may find in these pages a word to their deepest life. The form is that of the direct appeal. Repetitions mark the fragmentary character of the preparation, but the sermons were written with the profound conviction that more deeply than ever must organized Christianity enter into the secrets of our Lord and King, and learn from Christ "The Power of an Endless Life."

T. C. H.

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CONTENTS.

		Page
I.	Forms of Godliness	9
II.	The Power of an Endless Life . .	29
III.	Christ made Perfect	52
IV.	The Impulsive Type of Christianity	71
V.	The Intellectual Type of Christianity	88
VI.	The Ethical Type of Christianity .	107
VII.	The Mystic Type of Christianity .	128
VIII.	The Three Crosses of Calvary . .	149
IX.	The Temporal Kingdom	167

THE

POWER OF AN ENDLESS LIFE.

I.

FORMS OF GODLINESS.

Holding a form of godliness, but having denied the power thereof: from these also turn away. —2 Tim. iii. 5.

THIS warning is interesting as an indication of what Paul already saw coming into the life of the ancient primitive church. Some would persuade us that the church of the first three centuries was a model church in every way, but even during the life of Paul very nearly all the marks of degradation and disintegration that are to be seen more clearly working later on were already before his prophetic eye. Indeed, before three cen-

turies had passed the church had corrupted herself alike in doctrine and in ritual.

It is also interesting to see that Paul here makes the sharp distinction which later philosophy has emphasized and developed, the distinction between the form and the essential, between expression and power, between accident and that which is real. This distinction has passed into the thinking of the present generation more particularly through the transcendental philosophy of Germany, so that it is a commonplace, familiar thing with us, many of us dwelling upon it without knowing very clearly the origin of the idea.

It is perfectly clear to any one that reflects, that the form and the essence are not the same, that the essence is something so intangible that it is often very difficult to describe. But no matter how imperfect the form, the essential under-

neath the form is after all the real thing, the other is accidental. The forms in which men hold godliness are of infinite variety. What is godliness? Godliness is just what the word tells you; it is *god-li-ness*, or the quality of being like God. In Him we live, and move, and have our being. The old Greek poet saw that clearly, and Paul emphasizes his statement and endorses it by quoting him. We feel in our better moments how helpless we are to do right, and in our better moments we attribute all our right doing to the divine impulse that is in our life. This is the real spiritual meaning of the doctrine of total corruption. It is the expression of the sense within us that we are helpless apart from God, that it is only as God lives in us that righteousness is godliness. Wherever, therefore, we find anything that is admirable, it has its source in the divine, God is to have the

glory. This is the real foundation of the hope that is strong in every one of us, that Christ is much larger than the historic knowledge of Christ; that wherever there is self-sacrifice, wherever there is hungering of the soul for God, wherever there is the breaking, contrite heart, there is the revelation of the presence of God. The Christ as manifested in the historical form is the incarnation of that complete godliness, the other forms of which, so far as they are human, are always more or less imperfect.

So you will see also that there are forms of godliness so incomplete that they are masked caricatures of the Christ-like life. Indeed, if you thoughtfully consider the familiar forms of godliness, you will find in them all some element of the caricature that men are so apt to trace in the lines of the picture. The pagan forms of godliness seem at first sight warped out of all semblance to religious

life; loaded down with iniquity, heartless selfishness, gross sensuality. Heathen worship, so far as it has value, has it only as an imperfect expression of the craving of the human heart to come to that divine source of which every man at some time in his life feels a longing to drink. But all worship has value as by it we find ourselves in contact with God. This contact is divine life, however much we may caricature it, however poor the expression we may give it, however rude may be our conception of what the reality is.

In history we see jostling each other forms of godliness, such as the philosophy of heathendom contrasted with primitive Christianity, as paganism was contrasted with Judaism. The forms of godliness as we see them in pagan Greece and pagan Rome, were such as indicate that philosophy represented an advance on the popular forms of Roman and Greek

godliness. Hence philosophy set to work to destroy these older forms, but its weakness was that it put in their place a form only a little better.

Then there are the forms of godliness which we see in the splendid basilicas and glorious cathedrals and the monasteries of the Middle Ages, — forms of godliness splendid in their outward appearance, high, imposing, majestic to the imaginations of men; forms under which the deep underlying craving of the human heart for some expression of divinity sought to make itself felt in the world's real history. There are the forms of godliness as we find them in the theological scholasticism of the seventeenth century, — the scholasticism which, just as the primitive Christianity undermined the Jewish philosophy, sought in its turn to undermine the forms of godliness under which the religious spirit had expressed itself for fifteen centuries, because it had

found, and knew in its heart of hearts, that these forms were interfering with the growth of the divine life in its fuller expression. Scholasticism was also only a form, and it had to give way to something better. The Evangelical Emotionalism was a form under which a better godliness, a new appreciation of the Christ life, a holier conception of what life ought to be, sought to undermine scholastic mediævalism that Christ might be still more plainly seen.

Now can any nineteenth-century community, I might almost say any nineteenth-century congregation, say that all these forms of godliness are not more or less expressed among us? There is dogmatism among us, plenty of it, undiluted, most undisguised dogmatism. There is heathenism among us, heathenism that voices itself precisely in the sceptical, cynical, sneering philosophy which was on the lips of Cæsar and Cicero. There

is among us the baptized dogmatism that formed the life of the church of the third and tenth centuries, — a baptized dogmatism whose whole conception is æsthetic, and which is satisfied with the husks of externalism without coming in contact with the reality. There is mediæval scholasticism among us. It is found most largely expressing itself from the pulpit, but there is plenty of it there. There is evangelicalism in all its strength, in all its weakness among us. Sometimes it is not power, sometimes it is a form of godliness that is made up of a great many forms; it is the synthesis, the putting together of many forms; it is the corruption of the divine idea. We are, to-day as ever, in danger of holding the forms of godliness without the power thereof.

You may ask, then, is it a matter of indifference whether we are pagans or heathens; whether we hold mediæval scholasticism, or evangelical forms?

Yes, it may be a matter of complete indifference. If you are denying the power, you might as well deny the power under one form as another. If you are denying the power of God, it is all one to High Heaven under what form you make your denial. In the last days there shall come those who shall hold the forms of godliness, but deny the power thereof.

What is the power of godliness? The New Testament is so full of it that we have not seen it. It forms so much of Paul's writings that we have almost entirely ignored it. It is so important a factor that we have left it out. It is of so real moment in our religious life that we have let it pass us. The power of God is the divine indwelling promised when the Holy Spirit came down at Pentecost, promised to every man who will share with the early disciples the Pentecostal moment. It is God in us. It is the Holy Spirit speaking to and

inspiring us in the inspired book, or in the church, or in the pulpit, — inspiring us to right doing, to right living, to right thinking, to right sacrifice.

This is the power of godliness; and our denials of it, however much we may cover them in words, amount always to the same thing. We deny it in a hundred ways. We say to ourselves that our form is convenient, that we are satisfied with the present. The power of godliness denied in the interests of the form is the real weakness of the individual, the social, the Christian life. Let us see what is the power of this godliness. It is the power of God. What did it do in New Testament times? It shook men so that with blanched faces they saw the coming judgment, so that with trembling voices they declared to their generation what were the penalties of unrighteousness. It shook men so that their lives were changed. They forgot the past

and flung themselves into the future, careless of what it brought forth for them. The power of godliness made them new men in Christ Jesus, sent them to the cross if need were, that men might know that the power of God was righteousness and righteousness altogether, and that denial was death.

There was seen the power of that godliness when about the tenth century men began to realize that things could not go on as they were going. The monasteries were heaps of corruption. The priests were blind leaders of the blind. The nobles had added field to field and house to house until there was no place for the starving peasant, who had to accept anything the insolent nobles chose to give them. These warred among themselves until blood covered all the hills; but if the peasant dared lift his hand they would stop their wars among themselves and unite in still further trampling upon the

neck of the down-trodden serf, grinding him into the dust, mingling his blood with their sacrifices and his flesh with their feasts. Things could not go on as as they were. The power of godliness seized on one or two men, and they went forth with voices shaken with the thunders of Sinai and melting with the mercy of the Mount, telling men that the King would come, and that their judgment was of heaven. Men did repent for a little. God did lift for a little the clouds that hung over them. Yet they again forgot him. Then he baptized Europe in blood. Europe deserved it: and out of her ruins he fenced a new vineyard, and built a new wine-press, and he looks for grapes: it is for you and me to say what he will find. Will he find grapes, or only wild grapes?

The power of godliness was displayed in a very startling way in two countries very near to each other; and we have a

prophetic voice telling us in accents that ought to ring down the ages what came of the power of godliness denied in France. Read Carlyle's History of the French Revolution, and learn what the power of godliness denied brought forth. Over England hung precisely the same prophetic clouds. The conditions in England, if we are to trust the historian, were not very much better than the conditions in France; but the power of godliness became manifest, and changed the lives of two Oxford students, who gathered a few more students around them. The power of godliness shook them, and they went down to the Cornish miners. They gathered these miners about them; the tears rolled down their faces, these poor, despised, outcast members of society! There were Pentecostal waves which shook England from centre to centre, rolled over into this country where conditions were becoming very bad in-

deed, and they stopped for a little the processes that were going on here with such frightful rapidity. The power of godliness saved England for a little.

Now the power of godliness is a very strange thing. All power is. You cannot put your finger upon it. If I were to speak to you about the power of gravitation, you might know its laws, you might know its results. You might say that it shows itself so and so, and increases in such and such a ratio; that it holds the world together in such and such a way. But what is gravitation? You do not know, nor does any one. The best explanation that is given of it encounters so many insuperable mathematical objections that there is practically no adequate explanation of what gravitation is. The power that makes our spring creep slowly upon us, — the power of the sun's heat, — we know not either what it is. We can change the heat into light,

and the motion into electricity; we can change the electricity into lifting power; we can even take the electricity and in some mysterious way change it into vital power, and putting it through the roots of trees and plants greatly increase their vital activity. There is some strange correlation of all the physical powers round about us; but if you were to ask scientific men what is the power, they would say they do not know; they only know its results, and that is all science deals with.

Now we know the power of godliness only as we see it exemplified in results. You see the little bud in its hard case. If the hail were to come it would only jump off the hard enclosed bud; but the power of the sun is going to break through that hard case, and the little bud will fling itself out into God's sunshine with all the laughter of new green leaves to hail the joy of the coming

summer. The denial of the power of godliness is the denial of that which can change the forms of life as they are about us. If you say, "I do not believe in the power of the spring: I do not believe in this power of the sun; I do not believe what you tell me of the strange alchemy of the chemists;" I can only take you out and show you the bud bursting into the fulness of its joy, and say, "Something did that; some power there was that did that. I cannot analyze it for you, but it is there." The form is nothing; if the power is there it will make its own form, it will find its own expression. The denial of the power of godliness is the denial that there is in this world a divine life capable of changing the human heart, breaking its hardness, changing the stony heart into a heart of flesh, making us sympathetic, tender, and true. The denial of the power of godliness is the denial of the power to do this thing.

That denial is written large in the lives of some of us, though we hold the forms of godliness. You say, "I am sound in in my orthodoxy, I accept the Shorter Catechism and the Confession of Faith; I believe everything." And what does it amount to? It may amount to this, that you are holding the forms of godliness; and the servant in your household, the employee in your office, the tenant in your dwelling, and the dependent upon you or the employer who is over you, looks for the true power, and sees rather the awful denial of the power of godliness, making you selfish, making you unlovable, making you a lover of pleasure and not a lover of God, denying in your lives the things you profess in the church; so that men and women who know religion only as you have taught it to them, say that it is hard and cold, a dreary, barren intellectual belief, a dogma, and they cannot accept it, and say,

"Away with it!" They learn from you to deny, not the power, that they never see, but the form of godliness, and then you weep over their scepticism. You have friends, you have wives, you have husbands, you have dependents, you have employers; how is it? Are the forms of godliness that you practise so full of power that they are the natural expression of the divine life written on your very brow? as when Stephen stood up before those who denied the power of godliness, and as he looked his face became as the face of an angel, telling them to their faces of their sin, rehearsing all the ills, all the vices, all the iniquity of the past history of the children of Israel till at last they could stand it no longer, and they gnashed their teeth at him and took him and stoned him. "Jerusalem! Jerusalem! thou that stonest the prophets and slayest those that are sent unto thee, how often would I

have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not."

We come out from morning to morning to God's house. We sing hosannas to Jesus Christ. We claim him as Master. We entreat him to be with us. We hold the forms of godliness; but, let us ask ourselves, are we holding the forms of godliness and denying the power thereof? If it is so, that is the only infidelity that will really wreck the world. The infidelity that points out the mistakes of Moses from the public platform will do no harm if only, being faithful and not denying the power of godliness, you do not give wings to every shaft of infidelity. If only you lift up the cross in a life of self-denial and self-sacrifice, if only you live so that the world will take knowledge of you that you have been with Jesus, if only Christ is in your life, you need have no fear of infidelity, no

fear for the world. It is God's world, and he will reign in it, even if he turn and overturn until our present industrial situation, our organized Christianity, our political institutions are broken if need be into the trodden dust of the ages, and there come a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness, and Christ is King forever and ever.

II.

THE POWER OF AN ENDLESS LIFE.

And what we say is yet more abundantly evident, if after the likeness of Melchizedek there ariseth another priest, who hath been made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life. — HEB. vii. 15 – 16.

THIS chapter is not strictly an argument in the sense in which we shall find that word used in our books of formal logic. It is rather a forcible illustration. It is from the story of Melchizedek, with which the Jewish imagination had dealt rather liberally. As all easily recall the details of that story, it is unnecessary to dwell upon the various conceptions that grew up in the later Jewish history around this symbolic figure. Melchizedek greets Abraham. Abraham acknowledges him as priest

and king, and pays him tithes for some reason that is unknown to us. That he was a worshipper of the same God that Abraham acknowledged, that Abraham in some way or other was desirous of acknowledging either his moral or religious supremacy, is undoubted. Beyond that it is not useful for us to go. As an illustration this story has great weight, for the writer to the Hebrews has explained at considerable length to those to whom he was writing that the Jewish religion had not passed away, that they did not of necessity break with the national Judaism when they accepted Christianity. All that had passed away was the form, and that had absolutely passed away. Now there was a better revelation, — not a new revelation, but a better and higher revelation of that very thing toward which Judaism had been only pointing. The argument of the book centres around that one thought. The

writer also points out that the real priesthood was not bound up with lineal descent; that the priesthood existed independently of the forms of Judaism; that such a priesthood, whatever its change in character, was ever the same in its essential religious meaning, — that it was in fact the priesthood established in Christ, who, he says, is a priest after the order of Melchizedek.

Now what distinguishes this non-Judaic priesthood? It was the isolated character of Melchizedek in bold antithesis to the Jewish priestly family; and it is to this antithesis between the real and the symbolic, between the temporal and the eternal, that the author directs our attention. Christ is claimed as priest, not of law, but of power; not of carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life. Here there are contrasts, — law as over against power, law being only the expression, in many cases indeed

only the temporary expression of power. Power must be behind law. The law may change. Indeed, because power only can last, therefore the law must change. This is a fact familiar to every historical jurist.

And not after a carnal commandment is Christ a priest, — a carnal commandment having to do simply with circumstances which are temporal and changing, — but after the power of an indissoluble life. This is the uniqueness that is claimed for Christ, that he is the power that passeth not away, — "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day and forever," a priest not after a carnal commandment, not after law, but after the power of an endless life. I believe if we could only fix that contrast in our minds it would give us light upon some of the things that puzzle and perplex us. We should sometimes fail indeed to separate between the temporal and eternal elements, but we should

not be discouraged because we thus failed. There are some marked phenomena of life that might be more easily explained to us if we would remember this contrast between power and the expression of it. Take for instance the religions, even those which are beyond the pale of the immediate revelation granted to us in Christ. Surely there we may see something of this power which cannot be identified with the forms which we have come to recognize as weak, imperfect, and temporary. Of course, I cannot speak of the natural religions from the standpoint of one that knows them thoroughly; I can only take the testimony of those who are competent to judge, as I am not. Take, for instance, the testimony concerning Buddhism. It is useless for us to deny the power that Buddhism has had over men's lives. It started very much as Protestantism started, as a reaction against the formal-

ity and corruption of the older Brahmanism. Buddhism started as a reform, with no intention of breaking away from Brahmanism, with no intention of doing more than instilling into the older religion a force and vitality which it was only too evident it had lost. Now, the forms in which Buddhism comes to us are most evidently immaterial. Its philosophy has changed so completely that the schools of Buddhism are as numerous as the schools of Protestantism. All that is outward finds the greatest variety exhibited in its development. It is, of course, an easy explanation of its power to say that it was born of the devil; that was the older Christian explanation, but the ideas and spirit of the New Testament teach us to understand more properly the influence it has had over men's lives. Certainly its power was not in that it was a popular proclamation. It was not a mystic dream. Its power was

not in pandering to men's appetites. It preached sternly at all times upon a very high and noble level the doctrine of self-sacrifice and self-abnegation. Nor did it hold out certain popular dreams, certain hopes that men would readily grasp after. It did nothing of the kind. It never tempted men with dreams of a paradise in exchange for the life here. Its insistence was upon a life of righteousness here and now, and it held out as almost the only hope for the future an escape from the evils incident to the life that is now.

Take, on the other hand, the religion of Mohammed. Again we see that there is something that must be deeper than the forms of Mohammedanism, for these forms we have come to recognize as weak and imperfect. Now it is a very easy explanation of Mohammedanism to say that it was advanced by the power of the sword. But did you ever know of another instance where a nation of drunk-

ards and gamblers was made moral by any temporal power? If so, I wish very much that Mohammed's sword could be unsheathed in America. It is a very easy explanation of the power of Mohammedanism to say that it was the genius of one man. If that is true, how is it to be explained that the genius of Mohammed gave birth to a long succession of men of genius, on the very lines of Mohammed's power, that, for instance, it should produce a Saladin, who showed himself a nobler man than most of his Christian opponents? It is a comparatively easy explanation to say that the wild hopes of a temporal paradise tempted men to be moral. The experience of human life is that men are not tempted to morality by any such means. We must recognize, if we are honest, that behind all that is temporary and weak and imperfect in Judaism, in Mohammedanism, in Buddhism, in any of the religions whose

forms we have come to recognize as inefficient, there is something that needs to be revealed more perfectly, to be known and grasped at fully, if we would have the explanation of the religious life, and the power of that religious life over the characters and hopes of men.

We see in church history something of the dangers of forgetting the human character of Christ Jesus our Lord. We see some of the perils that come from a too sharp separation of his humanity from our humanity. Nothing could be more profitable for us than to dwell from time to time, with anxious thought for God's blessing as we do so, upon what is the real power of Christ's life as he presents himself to us as the explanation, not of Judaism only, but as the explanation of all religion wherever found, as the full revelation and incarnation of that after which we have been feeling, the full revelation of the power of an endless

life over men's fallen ambitions and fallen hopes, the power that raises men from the dead and brings life again to the sick and weary. And the power is not after a carnal commandment, not after the laws of the past, but it is the power of an endless life revealed in the person of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

This power of an endless life has not always been understood, and men have often sought to explain it in such a way that they have succeeded in explaining it away. Men have tried to reduce Christianity to a very high code of morals. Well, it is that. As soon as we are living upon the level of the sermon on the mount the Kingdom of God will be very nigh unto us. But it is not that only. The Stoic philosophy gave us a code of morals in many ways to be compared with the code in the New Testament. The code of Confucius does not fall very far short in the formal directions of life

from those of Christ. If Christianity were only a code of morals, if it were only the direction of what you and I should do and should leave undone, Christianity would not have had the power over men's hearts and lives that it has had; it would not have led to right doing in the way it has done whenever faithfully proclaimed and accepted. There must be some deeper and more abiding explanation of the power of the Christian religion over men's hearts and lives than the explanation that would reduce it simply to a series of "Thou shalt not," and "Thou shalt do this." It is not and never has been a mere code of morals.

Some have sought to find this power in its wonderful reviving of philosophy. But as a matter of fact Christianity did not revive philosophy. It only revived certain phases of Greek philosophy, and then often to Christianity's own great disadvantage. Again and again Chris-

tianity has been explained away with a certain deliberateness of purpose by seeking to identify it in its essence with that which any one may see to have been but passing phases of a decadent Greek spirit. Its power is not there. Its power has been felt there. Its power has been felt even in these decadent phases of Greek thought, but it is not to be identified with them in any sense; for Christianity is more than a philosophy, it is more than a system, it is more than a tradition, it is more than an organization, it is more than law, it is the power of an endless life.

The great mistake of some of the early centuries was to identify the Church with an organization, to make its power felt only through an organization; and some, particularly one historian, who has exercised great influence over the thinking of the English people, have sought to show how by just coming at the right

time the religion of Jesus Christ was able to subsidize the forms of an organization already existing, and use it for its own purposes. If this explanation of the power of Christianity is true, it is a very strange circumstance that it was able thus to appropriate to itself so powerful an organization; some explanation is due us as to how the lesser thus swallowed up the greater. But a little careful study, I think, will show you that though this organization was used by Christianity to a large degree, Christianity used it to her great and permanent disadvantage; and far from identifying Christianity with the Roman power which it subsidized, far from seeking its explanation in the power of that empire which it overthrew, we are to find in the very fact that it did too closely identify itself with this falling civilization the weakness which overtook it and wellnigh led to its absorption in the Middle Ages.

Christianity is more than the visible church. It is greater than the Roman Empire; for the church had influence over men's hearts that the Roman Empire could not exercise. Christianity is centred in the divinity of its founder; it is centred in the fact that the Divine Life became incarnate. It has as its real secret the fact that there has arisen another priest, who hath been made, not after a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life. It is this incarnation as a common meeting ground between humanity and God that gives Christianity its uniqueness. This uniqueness does not consist in certain transcendental abstractions or metaphysical distinctions. The uniqueness of Christianity consists first in the inseparableness of Christ from humanity, and, second, in the inseparableness of Christ from Divinity; and on this common ground between God and man the divine

within us finds its expression in Jesus Christ, the power of an endless life.

If you have followed the argument, I wonder if you will be prepared to pass with me to some of the more particular applications of that truth to the life that is about us. One of the difficulties of all statement is that it may be made so abstract that having made it and written it down we close it up and put it away upon our library shelves. But if it is really true, if there is really a power of an endless life, then it is for you and me to come under its influence, — to feel it ourselves, and make it a power felt in all life.

Because there are so many substitutes for this power of an endless life, it is difficult for weak faith to grasp it and to translate it into life. There is a substitute found in a certain intellectual destructiveness. We are soaked with the critical spirit, we revel in pulling things

to pieces to see what is inside; and in the process of our analysis we feel keenly that triumphant sense that the little child feels when she has torn her doll to pieces and finds the saw-dust running out. We find ourselves exulting over the things we are analyzing. No man can take a life, or a character, or a history, or a church, or a doctrine, or a creed, and analyze it, without putting himself in a certain position of judge as over against it; and in that exalted position, even though it is assumed by himself, he is apt to find a certain satisfaction and pride, which may lead him far astray. In our present age there is this air of critical analysis, of intellectual destructiveness, of refined culture, and we are apt to boast ourselves that we have found at last some kind of substitute for this power of which we hear so much down the ages, and which the Nineteenth Century would like exceedingly to do

without. Well, we can do without it possibly for a little while, but not very long. No age can do without it and do its work. It is the one thing worth having, all else fades in significance in relation to it. The power of an endless life alone brings all things into their proper proportions. It shows the weakness of mere critical analysis that, after we have pulled our doll to pieces, we find ourselves sobbing over the ruins, face to face still with the problems of death and dissolution, face to face still with shame and unrighteousness and iniquity and oppression, our hearts still unsatisfied; and we wonder if life is only this, — only the satisfaction of pulling to pieces the things that have pleased us for a moment, and then leaving them, and going out forever and forever without hope and without God in the world. There is nothing that we need so much as to get away from our abstractions, our meta-

physics, our analysis and our culture, and come face to face with the realities of things; and in our heart of hearts we know, from the fact that it has had real influence in our lives, that there is a power of the Holy Ghost, that there is a power of an endless life, that unless we feel it and know it, unless it throbs in our life, life is a failure.

There is another substitute which I think is not less a real temptation. It is found less in the cogitations than in the active lives of men round about us. It comes, I think, more vividly into the foreground on the Fourth of July and Washington's birthday, and other great occasions for parading the wonderful prosperity and material advancement of the Nineteenth Century, and more particularly our portion of it. Let me call it the commercial antichrist, — the sense in men's hearts, that religion is a very good thing in its way, but that there

are primary ends first to be reached; that there is after all a real power in the world, and that is the power of material prosperity, which has to be attended to first. Then again, this heresy tells us that men cannot conduct their business unless they do this or that, and the principal thing is to conduct our business. We have great confidence in ourselves that once having attained our end, then we can open the doors of heaven with our gold and bribe the Almighty with our successes; we will give him churches and asylums and colleges, and leave him large legacies in our wills. There is nothing that we need to come face to face with more than this, — that the worship of the commercial antichrist is eating the hearts and lives out of men, and that that worship must pass away, and that only when it has passed away shall we know in its fulness what is the power of an endless life. For all things pass

away. We are in the midst of the cosmic stream of prosperity only to find that our imperishable gold slips away. You treasure it up, and those who are most dear to you are corrupted and damned by it. You have worshipped it, and the image you have worshipped has fallen upon and crushed you. You have bowed to men for its sake, and they have turned upon you and accused you of the things they are doing themselves every day, because they dread the exposure which has come to you; and so shame and cursing have ever come because men know not the power of an endless life.

This is what we need to know; and if anything can teach it to us it would be a short review of the history we have been sketching. "All things pass away," says the writer to the Hebrews; nothing can be trusted, all things pass away. Only one thing remains, "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and forever."

Over against Jerusalem he stood, and Jerusalem condemned him, and stretched him on the cross, and said, "Ha! ha! we have done once and for all with this deceiver, we have nailed him upon a cross of shame." Jerusalem passed into history, and Christ into history to make but more manifest the power of an endless life. The Romans took his followers and made torches of them to light their gardens. The power of Rome passed away, but the torches that lit their gardens sent their light into the farthest North, reclaiming men to righteousness, and even barbarianism in all its brutality and ignorance felt the power of this endless life. The Middle Ages said to themselves, "We have found the last analysis!" They too failed of their high aims; and when brave monks spoke up they cast them from their synagogues, and haughty Rome sat a queen in her power and laughed at the troublesome monks quar-

relling in their cells. But the power of an endless life made itself manifest not only in the Protestant North, it shook even Catholic Rome, and called her to face the bitter fact that if she would not be destroyed she must hearken to the voice of God. She hearkened, and God spared her. He is speaking yet, and Protestantism and Catholicism have both to hear his voice in sorrowing rebuke that they do not realize that the power of all the past is this same power, "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and forever;" a priest not after a carnal commandment, not after the intellectual destructiveness of the Nineteenth Century, not in accordance with our philosophies, not in accordance with the traditions of our ecclesiasticism, not in accordance with our refinements in the religious life, not in accordance with our industrial wrongs, but after the real power that is within every man that sub-

mits himself, crying aloud to his God to make known the righteousness that is in Christ Jesus, that our lives with all their emptiness and poorness may be hidden in the life that is in Jesus Christ. As we look into his face sometimes it seems to us there must be on that marred visage a look of bitterness and despair that we should have denied him thrice as we have done; but he still pleads with us if we only will hear his voice, saying to us, "Come unto me, and find rest for your souls," and know that through his cross, his self-sacrifice, his self-denial, his righteousness is the full and free forgiveness of our God, and that forgiving love is the power of an endless life.

III.

CHRIST MADE PERFECT.

Who, . . . though he was a Son, yet learned obedience by the things which he suffered; and having been made perfect, he became unto all them that obey him the author of eternal salvation. — HEB. v. 8, 9.

THE fulness of God's revelation is such, and our capacity is so limited, that every age and every generation, certainly every epoch, has new light from heaven upon the path that man has made dark. We ought ever to be learning more of the way of God. We should be ever seeking the revelation that God is ever willing to grant in his Church, in history, in our reasoning faculties, in the study of his Scripture. There is, indeed, the danger that, on the one hand, all that

is old may have such attraction for us that we shall refuse to enter into the new, and thus miss much of the revelation of our God; and on the other hand, that we may be so charmed with the novelties that we shall forget the continuity of God's revelation, and in seeking these new things have only one-sided views of truth.

We must therefore seek constantly the truth in that which is old, and holding fast the profession of our faith, press forward into that which is new indeed to our thinking, but old to the eternal wisdom of our God. The process is the same as spiritual process is everywhere. Truth is borne in upon us; then we begin to think about it, then we try to express ourselves. When truth is borne in upon us in the first instance, we are very likely to be overwhelmed and confused; there is more light than we can walk in. There falls on us that same darkness and con-

fusion in the very midst of the glare of the light that seems to have fallen upon the disciples, and for a little while they needed to draw aside that they might rightly consider this new thought which had been unfolded to them. The process, then, of analysis finds our spirits often in the critical mood. The moment we begin to express the things that God has been seeking to reveal to us, we find our words quite inadequate for the purpose. So it is rather the expression of the truth that is progressive than the revelation itself; rather that our capacity for seizing upon it develops gradually than that God is giving us more and more light, though that may also be said to be true.

The same thing is true in all art expression. You no doubt have had feelings that you would fain have expressed, it may be of deep depression, of melancholy. You find your words inadequate; but some one brings to your notice a

poem by some masterhand, and he not only expresses the feeling in your heart that was seeking a voice, but he reveals to you a higher self, and deeper feelings, of which you had only been either dimly conscious or wholly unconscious until the artist revealed them to you.

But even words have their limits. And so it may be that a picture grasps at your thought and expresses it as even words cannot. Take, for instance, such a poem as that of Edgar Allan Poe's "The Raven;" place it alongside the marvellous print from the hand of Dürer of "Melancholia," and see how the picture and poem answer one to the other, expressing tones and feelings of your thought that neither is able wholly to articulate. Even here there seems to be a limit; but you chance to come where music is being played. Here words and picture are supplemented with the tones of the instruments. Your spirit is caught

up, and the minor chord that sings through the refrain answers back to your spirit, and you rejoice that not only your emotions find expression, but that there has been revealed to you perchance the meaning and secret that is behind all emotion, so that your better and nobler self finds itself in the artistic expression of the moment.

So also on a higher plane is it true of God's revelation of himself in the person of Jesus Christ. There was very little danger that the disciples would forget the divinity of Jesus Christ; there was great danger that the world would do that. The danger was rather that the disciples would forget his humanity, and that danger Christ seems to have foreseen all through his ministry. It is his Sonship, it is his manhood, it is his limitations that he emphasizes in the midst of his devoted followers. How far he saw into history, church history tells you.

It was not his divinity, but his humanity that the Church forgot, and having forgotten and laid it aside, the painted image of the child, the Virgin Mary, or the saints had to take the place that was thus vacated, as revelations to man of that link between him and the divinity which he sought, but could truly find only in the person of our Saviour Jesus Christ. And so through many ages of church history there was steadily lacking the due emphasis upon this, the real humanity of our Saviour Jesus Christ. Christ is the revelation not only of God to man, but of man to his better self. Jesus Christ is not only the fulness of the Fatherhood revealed, he is also equally emphatically a revelation of manhood as it ought to be, the ideal of those things for which in our better moments, when the Spirit of God is moving upon our spirits, we long to know and search after, feeling that these things are eternal life.

Christ's humanity is emphasized all through the New Testament. It is not simply in his own words. We find throughout the writings of Paul and of John, throughout this letter to the Hebrews by an unknown author, throughout the whole literature of the New Testament, a constant emphasis upon the absolute humanity of our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. He grew in wisdom; he knew not the times and seasons; he did his miracles by the authority of his Father; he thanked his Father that he had been heard when he cried to him before the tomb of Lazarus; he knew his Father was able to save him from death, and cried out in the bitterness of his agony, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me!" and he yielded his will to the will of his Father, "Not as I will, but as thou wilt." And so we have Paul emphasizing the fact that he took upon himself the form of a servant,

that he emptied himself and became man that he might enter into our hopes and fears; that he might enter into the very temptations, into your sorrows and my sorrows, and bleed with our bleeding hearts, and weep with our tears; that he might reveal unto us that better nature, that higher and diviner life, which has been clouded by our sinfulness, and can only be recovered by faith.

We find no stronger assertion of this absolute humanity than we do here in this letter to the Hebrews, and it is to this particular clause that I shall ask your more especial attention. "Who . . . though he was a son, yet learned obedience by the things which he suffered; and having been *made perfect*, he *became* unto all them that obey him the author of eternal salvation."

If any one were to ask you what the value of your life was, I have no doubt at all there would be many

responses of a different nature by those who frankly answered. Some would say, "Well, to be honest and frank, the whole concern of my life just at present is my business. These are times of depression, and there are many things I have to neglect, and this is one thing I dare not neglect. For my own sake, and for the sake of my family, my business is at present my chief concern." Ah! then, my friend, you are not prospering in business, no matter how much money you may be making. If that is your chief concern in life, then life, indeed, has its solemn question to you, Is that life worth living? Possibly you will say, "Well, it is not so much my business as my family. I live for my family; they must be supported and cared for. This is surely my chief duty; I should be worse than infidel according to the sacred writer if I did not care for those immediately depending upon me." That is

very true; but if this is your chief concern, you are not caring for them in the best possible way: "He that loveth not me more than father or mother, or sister or brother, is not worthy of me." You can care best for your family by not making it the chief concern of your life. You can care best for those whom you love by not making them the real thing for which you are living. Some of you perhaps would be tempted to say, "It is my country." I suppose, even in Chicago, there would be some found loyal enough to feel that the time of peace is more dangerous for these United States than the time of war. You say in your heart of hearts, "It is my country which is my chief concern." O patriot! you cannot care for your country as you might if it is the one thing for which you are living. There is a higher secret of life than country or family or business, and that higher secret can be learned only in the

study of the life and sufferings of our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Let us turn to see what was the secret of his life. He learned in it! That was the thing! You live that you may learn. You are here, not to live for yourself, not to die for yourself, but to learn, — to learn the things that you cannot learn from business or in the home circle or from your country. You are here to learn to enter into secrets and to find out mysteries, to enter into the secret places of the Most High; you are here to make something of your life; you are here to be robed in a robe of righteousness; you are here to find out secrets, not for yourself only, but for others, — the high secrets of eternal wisdom; you are here to learn, and unless you are learning, though all these other things may have their places in the school of Christ, may be schoolmasters to bring us to Christ, may have even eternal value as they come into your

life, yet unless they are ministers of righteousness, your life is so far forth a failure.

Is life worth living? It depends upon what description of life it is. The Christ life was worth living; and just so far as your life is the Christ life it is of value, and just so far as it is not the Christ life it is of no value whatsoever: "If the salt have lost its savor, wherewith shall it be salted?"

What things did Christ learn? He learned obedience, the basis of noble character. Let me venture a criticism upon our American life and say that obedience is one of the things lacking in our life, that we are lawless as a people. We are lawless in the home; we are lawless on the street, and we need as a people to learn obedience before we shall be fit to command as we ought. Some of you know what are the exercises on the fencing floor or in the boxing-place. Possi-

bly some of you have seen the weariness with which the pupil constantly obeys the master's commands. Blow after blow, defence after defence, in barren, arbitrary sequence: "Oh! let me alone; I can do these things now by myself." But that is not the point. He must do the thing at once and in the exact moment of command. He must do it in obedience to the master's ruling, because the master knows that the pupil is soon to stand before one whose every movement is a command, whose every thrust must be met at once and sharply with the proper defence. He knows that the strife is one constant obedience to demands made upon him from the outside, and the pupil is not fit to control himself, is not fit to command his muscles, until he has learned by absolute obedience what will enable him in the conflict to answer with the proper defence every attack.

So at the basis of all worthy character

there is this absolute obedience; and it is the only freedom. Lawlessness is not freedom, license is not freedom; license is slavery, lawlessness is worse than slavery. The only true freedom is obedience to the highest, the search after the noblest, the surrender of all to that which is infinite and eternal and unchangeable.

Christ came to teach us obedience. And he taught it to us by learning obedience himself by the things which he suffered. We are a little squeamish now about some things. The doctors bear some of the blame of that. The pain that they relieve us of leads us to dread any pain they cannot assuage, so that the things we bore once with perfect ease now seem to us large bugbears. I do not know that on the whole this is for evil; but, oh, friends, there is nothing we need more than to be willing to bear pain for others; than the power of sympathy to enter into the woes and pains of

those who are about us. There is nothing that you and I need more than to be able to enter into the world's agony; and in entering into it ours may seem a very hopeless task; but even in the going with others into the vale of darkness, the touch of God through us may help them to Christ. The kind word means more than he who speaks it can know, to the heart that is bowed down. There is an immense amount of pain in this world because from sheer, culpable ignorance and sheer selfishness we cannot enter into the woes of those about us. We need to throw ourselves into the battle of the world's tears and sorrows; we need to know something of these bruised hearts in their agony; we need to weep with those who weep, that at last we may rejoice with those who rejoice; we need to learn obedience through the things that we suffer ourselves, that we may be able as Christ did to enter into the woes

of those who suffer. And so suffering and pain have their sacred ministry; and Christ came, not to be ministered unto, but to minister. He took upon himself the burden of the world's wild woe; he entered into the trials and sorrows of this life and was ground in the mad machinery of man's devilish selfishness, bigotry, and ignorance. In entire obedience to the mandates from above, he learned obedience by the things which he suffered, and has revealed to us a higher manhood, a nobler ideal. He has taught us that life is best worth living when we too learn obedience through the things which we suffer. He has taught us that it is not in seeking our own, nor in seeking to escape the world's misery, nor in throwing off the burden of its woes and pains, but in seeking the extrication of the whole world from its woe, that we shall find our highest life and enter into the joy unspeakable of our Lord.

So it was that Christ learned obedience through the things which he suffered, and has become the author of an eternal salvation. Oh, surely there is no nobler epitaph to be written over the tomb of any one than that he served his country and his God! There is no higher ideal of manhood than that we enter into the fulness of the salvation of which Jesus Christ has become the author! It would be glorious simply to enter into it; it would be more glorious to take part in the redemption. Who are we to be counted worthy of this? And yet Christ has called us to it, and we are to fill up in our bodies that which is lacking of the sufferings of Christ for his body's sake, which is the Church. We with Christ are to become the redemption of the world. Suffering as he has taught us to suffer; dying as he has taught us to die; living as he lived; walking with him; knowing what true manhood is because

he has revealed it unto us; learning obedience by the things which we suffer, we shall enter with him as his brethren, called no more his servants but his brethren; taking part with those whom his blood has washed from their stains.

This, dear friends, is the meaning of life. This is the bringing in of the eternal salvation. This is the one secret of the establishment of God's kingdom. I know not the hearts of those before me: who can enter into the secret places of another's life? But I know enough of life to know that there is no one heart before me, even the youngest, which has not had its woe. I know there is no one before me to whom life has not from time to time become a weary entanglement and a maze that seems hopelessly ensnarled. Dear friends, if life were perfectly plain we should never learn; we should never know. It is because of this entanglement that we feel the awful burden of

our helplessness, and groan within ourselves waiting for the redemption. To you that redemption is proclaimed. "Freely ye have received, freely give." God has forgiven you: walk in the forgiven life; know him; choose him; learn from these very sufferings, from these very mistakes and tangled mysteries, the obedience that is freedom, the life that is eternal salvation. May God help us, and grant us his grace and his peace.

IV.

THE IMPULSIVE TYPE OF CHRISTIANITY.

Simon, Simon, behold, Satan asked to have you, that he might sift you as wheat: but I made supplication for thee, that thy faith fail not: and do thou, when once thou hast turned again, stablish thy brethren. — LUKE xxii. 31, 32.

FROM the very fact that Christianity is a life, we see that it expresses itself in a variety of ways. From the very first Christianity has been the synthesis, the gathering and putting together, of a great many tendencies and forces animated by one impulse. From the very first, different elements have entered into it; some to aid, some to hamper its development. The infinite wisdom of God provided so that every variety of character, and the impulses of affection, of law, of intellect,

might all be used for the building up and strengthening of his kingdom on earth. We shall expect, therefore, to find throughout Christian history, both in its beginning and in its progress, very great differences in types of character. No one man gathers into himself all the fulness of the revealed truth. We shall find as we study the biography of the New Testament that in a wonderful way the various types of character are baptized and redeemed, and, at the same time, they preserve marvellously their individual peculiar characteristics, bringing these with them into the service to which God has called them.

We do not know so much about the work that Peter did in the early Church as we do concerning the work of Paul, because the second part of the Acts and the Epistles of Paul are the material upon which we rely mainly for our account of the early Church, and these of course

dwell largely upon the subject of Paul's labors and activities. But, at the same time, there is enough left us to show that Peter was a very strong, a very dominant element in that part of the Church which centred around Jerusalem, and which influenced Bithynia and the more eastern parts of Asia Minor.

The traditions about Peter's life are not very trustworthy. We do not find very many traditions at all concerning him until about one hundred years after his death; and then, although the traditions are many, they can be nearly all traced back to one source, so that we have not the advantage of a great many witnesses. These traditions are moreover often so evidently foolish and untrustworthy that it is very difficult to build up any scheme of his Christian activity upon the basis of them.

But we do not need to go to any traditional story of Peter's life to get a definite

impression of the man. His is one of the marked characters of the New Testament's wonderful series of portraits, taking them merely as literature. It is marvellous with what distinctness character is etched throughout the Old and New Testaments! How many masterpieces we have of character sketches, a few words giving a whole character! This is true, for instance, of the patriarchs. It is true also throughout the Old Testament history, sometimes the whole life and activities of a king being gathered together in two or three verses in a perfectly marvellous way.

With a few touches we have Peter's character painted before us with a distinctness that it is hard to find the equal of anywhere in literature. Peter is a man essentially of impulses. Energetic, marvellously useful along these lines, but, like a good many impulsive people, not very trustworthy, not to be always

counted upon. Peter is the first to come to Jesus walking upon the water, but very soon sinks because his faith gives way. Peter is the very first to draw his sword in defence of the Master, — is the only one to spring to his defence, but denies him to the maid at the door. Peter is the first to speak, but not always the wisest when he speaks. Peter is very ready to answer the question as to who Jesus is, — "Thou art the Messias," but he is also very apt to take Christ aside and rebuke him, when the Messias tells about the suffering which lies before him. Peter in his impulsiveness will not have Christ wash his feet, and in equal impulsiveness would have him wash his hands and his head that he might be all consecrated to the Master's service.

This is characteristic of Peter not simply before Christ's death; but even after his death, in his epistles, we find

the same characteristics. Peter is one of the very first to try to bridge the gulf between the Gentile and Jewish Christian churches, but one of the very first to retreat ignominiously from the position he had taken, when he is in Antioch surrounded by those who say to him, "Thou being a Jew, eatest with those who have not been circumcised." And Paul withstood him to the face because he was, in his very impulsiveness, in his very superficiality, in danger of permitting that to be done which would have left the Christian Church in chains, and would have hampered irretrievably its progress.

We find that Peter is impulsive; and yet we need impulsiveness, and we have to take it with its weakness and with its strength. There is an impulsive Christianity which is one of the largest and most needed factors in the building up of the healthy Christian life. Impulsive Christianity has indeed weakness, with

which we have to reckon. The man of impulses is a little like the kindling with which you kindle your fire. You might use a whole box of matches in trying to set fire to the coals, and you could not do it. Take a little kindling, strike your match, and you soon have a steady glow. It is true you could not very easily warm your house with kindling, but at the same time you could not very easily warm your house without it. Impulsive Christianity is very needful to set fire to the forces that are in God's providence regenerating the world. Impulsive Christianity will have indeed its weakness in that like Peter it is very much in danger of denying the Master. The man of impulses is very apt to find himself stranded by waves of a strength he has not taken accurate reckoning of; but, at the same time, every great religious movement has commenced with the fiery, impulsive elements of the community. It was the

impulsive Cornish miners who gave the key-note to the evangelical revival whose blessed force is not ended yet. It was the impulsive classes in North Germany that caught fire first when a lonely monk defied the Romish power and proclaimed liberty to the captive. It was the impulsive classes in this country who heard the preaching of Finney, who accepted him with all his extravagance, with all his weaknesses, with all his want of accurate thought. They accepted him because they felt his was a message from on high, that touched men's hearts with something better than the old dogmatism on which the Church was starving herself to death, a message that set this country on fire; and after it was set on fire, there were steadier forces to complete and carry on the movement to a better and higher issue, out of which has come so much that has meaning for our national and individual life.

We shall have to take the impulsive man and impulsive Christianity into account because they form a large element even of the most reflective life. We would not give anything for a man who did not have impulses, even though they were not always wise. We would not care to have even a wise man as our dearest friend, if a cold, calculating intellect was all you had to deal with. Impulses, even if sometimes they are wrong, if sometimes they do disturb our judgment, so that our emotions get the better of our calculations, are divine factors in character building. Our calculations are not infallible any more than our impulses, and sometimes it is a good thing to give our emotions free scope, and learn from mistakes to guide them better, but not to suppress them.

We have to take into account impulses because they are a force for good or for evil. There is an impulsive class that

will make itself felt, and it will make itself felt for the kingdom of evil unless it is baptized and captured for Christ. There were some men of impulse no doubt in the throng that cried: "Allelujah! Hosanna to the Son of David!" and then, "Crucify him! crucify him!" but Peter, even if he did deny his Lord, did not cry, "Crucify him!" One man of impulse at least had been captured for Christ, for the future kingdom, for the glory of the cross! We need to see to it that our Christianity is not purely reflective, is not purely intellectual; is not pure calculation, is not pure thought. We need impulses; we need holy impulses. We need to feel their throbs in our life; we need, indeed, sometimes to know the benefits of impulsive repentance. It is good for us sometimes to go out with Peter into the lonely quiet at cock-crowing and yield to the impulsive bitterness of our emotions, pouring out our soul in the agony

of repentance because our lives have so often been a betrayal of the consecrated trust God has committed to every one of us to keep against that day. And I should not wonder, if we knew Peter's influence better we should find out that he was a strength to all the brethren because of his very sympathy with them. I think that underlies Christ's remarks to Peter. He says: "Lovest thou me more than these!" He did not simply rebuke him. Peter had been professing his loyalty so very pronouncedly, possibly those who sometimes were his rivals, his former partners in his fishing concerns, may have felt he was a little too forward. "Now," says Christ, "when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." It is for the most part the man of emotions, the man whose heart is largest, that is felt in the time of trouble to come closest to us and to strengthen us most in our hour of need. What warm sympathy

Peter must have had with those who touched him, who, like himself, were apt to betray the Master in the stress of their temptation! Peter, I have no doubt, was many a time able to take some weaker Christian than himself and help him up, saying to him, "You know very well the story of my betrayal, but Christ has not given me up. No, he said to me, 'Feed my lambs; feed my little sheep.' He looked me straight in the eye, he took me by the hand, he helped me up, and he will help you up." Peter, I have no doubt, was able to strengthen the brethren as some of those who had sinned less were not able to strengthen them, because of his sympathy, because he was able to enter into their lives and weaknesses and to take account of the yielding of our whole nature under the stress of temptation. When so tempted we are able almost to cry out with Paul, "It was not I that did

it, but the flesh: therefore, the thing I would, that I do not; and the thing I would not, that I do."

We need emotional Christianity, with all its errors of judgment, that we may come closer to one another and feel with one another. With kindled emotions and kindly impulses we need to go to one another and help one another up, even though the cooler, calculating judgment will often speak about the hopelessness and helplessness of it.

Christ on his cross felt also what it was to surrender his spirit, and the dear loved ones round about him with all their weakness, into the keeping of his Father. God needs us, even in our weakness. He needs all that there is of us. He needs the weakness; if it is committed to him, if it is crucified with Christ, if it is baptized unto his death, God can use it, and will use it in good time.

And when we are converted, let us

strengthen our brethren. We need that sympathetic, impulsive Christianity, because it comes first, and will often go further than the more calculating kind. John got first to the sepulchre, but it was Peter that entered in. John first recognized Christ, but it was Peter who jumped into the water to go to him. Impulsive, emotional Christianity is needed because it has power to carry us on, sometimes even to victory that seems wellnigh hopeless. God can cleanse and baptize our emotions, and send them further and faster than our poor weak judgments may deem safe in the beginning. We need to baptize our best and noblest impulses; we need to baptize our emotions; we need to commit them to God, to have them lifted up, sanctified and made a burning fire.

This age prides itself upon being reflective, analytical, critical. So it is. That has all its place. Sometimes we are a little fond of staying back rather than

setting ourselves against the wrong: "Dear me! we ought to do so and so. We ought to do this and that. Somebody ought to go in and purify our politics!" A crying need of the world today is a baptized indignation at wrongdoing. We need to feel that God can use us when we are set on fire for him. He will take care of the judgment, quickening and sharpening it in the fires of enthusiasm, by which we will set fire to the world. Our impulses for righteousness need obedience.

We need to have our emotions touched. There is something very wonderful to me in the way in which the cross of Christ seems to have affected the northern barbarism. One might hardly think that those wild, ferocious, blood-stained Northmen, accustomed to every sort of cruelty, to every sort of iniquity, could be reached on the side of their emotions. Yet it was not those skilled in ecclesiastical

orthodoxy that reached the North. It was not an elaborately reasoned system that touched these men. What really touched the north of Europe was a band of brave but ill-trained monks, who went holding up simply the cross on which was nailed the suffering, bleeding body of Christ. They were touched by that story of atoning love as you would hardly have thought these great brawny, blood-stained Northmen could have been touched; and once touched, they became the ethical power that broke the chains from off the Church and set Europe free. We need to have Christ lifted up, not only that our intellects may be true, but that our hearts may be touched with the message of God's everlasting and infinite love, showing itself forth in the suffering and patience of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We need again and again to be converted by looking at the cross and seeing there all the love of the incarnate

God, that we may be ready to crucify with him our impulses, our passions, our affections, our lives; that we may look into his face and be able to answer truly, "Lord, thou knowest all things. I have been wicked and sinful and untrue to thee. My heart is wellnigh hardened with selfishness and self-deceit; but I would have thee touch me, I would have thee draw me closer to thyself. Thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee." May God help us to consecrate our emotions to the service of Christ. May God help us to hear the word that has come to many a weak and wavering Peter: "Simon, Simon, Satan hath desired to have thee, that he may sift thee as wheat: but I have prayed for thee, and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren."

V.

THE INTELLECTUAL TYPE OF CHRISTIANITY.

With freedom did Christ set us free: stand fast therefore, and be not entangled again in a yoke of bondage. — GAL. v. i.

PAUL swept into himself in a very remarkable way the three world influences, — the Greek, the Roman, and the Jewish. One of the great historians of Germany has pointed out that in these three world influences we have the practical explanation of all that we value as civilization. He was a Roman citizen. There are, I think, decided traces throughout both Romans and Galatians that he was fairly well acquainted with at least the principles of Roman law. His knowledge of Greek poetry we are possibly inclined to exaggerate because of such

chance quotations from it as we find in his writings; but, at the same time, it is not at all unlikely that he was familiar with the literature of Greece, for in his own native city of Tarsus Greek influences were the predominant ones. Tarsus was a city that had had a great deal of influence, and its influence was very largely intellectual. It had been greatly attracted by Greek thought; so, for instance, the games of Tarsus were in all likelihood prevalently Greek rather than Roman, which would indicate a predominance of Greek rather than Roman thought.

Of course, Paul was Jewish, and thoroughly Jewish; a Pharisee brought up in the Pharisaic schools, thoroughly acquainted with the history of his people, thoroughly imbued with the best spirit of his own time. Thus we have a very remarkable figure, combining in one centre the synthesis of the great influences

that were to mould the destiny of the nations of the earth. It was natural, therefore, that Paul should make for himself an intellectual atmosphere in which the Church's thinking was to develop. He did for the Church what neither James, nor John, nor Peter could have done so far as we know them. It was quite impossible for even the wonderful Fourth Gospel and the writings of John to have quite the effect upon the Roman mind that Paul's writings were able to exercise, in part through the limitations of the Roman mind, and also, indeed, owing to the limitations of the intuitive and perceptive character of John's mind.

We take Paul, therefore, very naturally as the type of what we may call intellectual Christianity. Christianity must be intellectual if it is to command the respect of men whom God would save. Christ will have the whole of man; he will have his mind, and his heart, and

his life. Christ's kingdom is not a one-sided kingdom. It is to be social, it is to be intellectual, it is to be moral, it is to be spiritual, it is to be rounded out. The intellect must be fired from above; and once fired from above, it enters forthwith into the Christian life as a very large and very important factor.

But the intellectual type of Christianity has of course its dangers. The intellectual life has a certain tendency to arrogance that is born and bred of the constant comparison of its own self with the grosser stupidity which it finds round about it. A man does not need to be very far on in the intellectual life before he begins to compare himself with others, greatly to his own advantage, however, and to the disadvantage of those whom he has left behind. The danger of intellectual arrogance is especially perceptible in the mind that is clear and logical. The mind that having started

with certain terms must carry its reasoning on to the end has no patience with the mind that insists on breaking in with other lines of thought before the solution is given.

Intellectual Christianity has also its dangers in the fact that the intellectual life is very apt to exclude us from some other phases of life. The man who is a mere intellectual machine cannot enter into many of the hopes and fears and wishes of the multitude about him, for the multitude is not governed in the first instance by the intellect. If we were quite shrewd enough we should realize that the intellect must come after a great deal else, for the intellect is analytical, and if there is not something to analyze it has no place at all. But this is too often forgotten, and the danger to thinking men is a certain dogmatic narrowness, a certain hardness, and conventional type even, so that we find that intellectual Christianity

as it has come down the ages has often repelled instead of attracting even those to whom intellectual Christianity ought to have had power and value.

I think you will notice in Romans and Galatians a tone somewhat different from that which you will find in Philippians and Ephesians, and different also from the personal tone of the pastoral letters. No thoughtful mind can fail to see that there was progress, decided progress, in the spiritual life of Paul. When we leave the first and second centuries and turn to such men as Tertullian and Augustine, and in the seventeenth century to such men as the scholastics and the intellectual leaders of the Reformation, we are thoroughly and powerfully impressed with a certain intellectual narrowness of dogmatism, and a harsh and arrogant tone, which shows us that on the intellectual side of Christianity there are dangers which it is scarcely possible to avoid, no

matter on which side of the controversy we stand, unless we are fully baptized with the spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ, and have made intellectual surrender to him as well as surrender of the heart.

Intellectual Christianity from the very nature of the thing is analytical, and analysis is the pulling apart. From the very nature of it intellectual Christianity has in it a certain destructive element. It must criticise, it must look behind, it is never satisfied with the forms as they are round about. It could not be, it would cease to be, intellectual Christianity if it did not thus insist, and sternly insist, upon satisfying the conditions of God-given reason. But there is the danger that it may confine itself to the destructive, and that the constructive work be left out of account, — to the pulling to pieces of Sadduceeism with nothing as yet to put in its place. But for all that, we must take it as it is. We enter the

Christian life with our reason, and we must take our reason along with us. The forms of reason we cannot leave behind any more than we can leave other forms behind. When you first took Christ into your life, you took him with your many defects, which Christ in your heart is going to cure daily if you will surrender yourself daily unto him. There are faces about us that you have perhaps seen grow beautiful because of the life of suffering and sacrifice that has changed the plain features into a heavenly beauty. But we cannot start with our faces shining. We cannot start with anything but reason as God has given it to us. Paul had to start in his Christian course as a Pharisee. He had to leave much behind; but it was because he surrendered his reason, surrendered it wholly to Christ, that it was changed and transformed into one of the mightiest and most potent weapons for the winning of the victory

of the Church and for the building up of the temple whose strengthening God had entrusted to his servant.

And so I think we can not go far astray in taking Paul as a splendid type of the proper use of the intellect, and as the proper intellectual type of Christianity. This is evident, because Paul brought to the service of Christ everything he had, — his learning, his Pharisaic training, his knowledge of Greek thought, his knowledge of the Hebrew language; and he laid it all as a sacrifice on the altar to his Master. His intellect, his intellectual powers, these were his Master's, because everything he had was his; and what splendid use he made of them! Take, for instance, that scene upon Mars Hill. This little Jewish man, probably rather unsightly, if tradition is correct, who comes to Athens, where every one is so graphically described as seeking only

to hear some new thing. He met these Athenians with their scientific dogmatism, with their philosophical problems; they amused themselves with these things and believed that they were living, precisely as a great many of us to-day amuse ourselves by haunting the lecture-rooms and discussing questions, without any real intention of making them bear upon our lives or, through us, upon other people's lives. They were at Athens, as we should find them in New York and Boston and Chicago to-day, and to this intellectual centre the despised Jew comes. They will hear what this babbler says. And could anything have been more calculated to win their attention than the tact with which he commences to speak of the things they believe in common, leading them up to the things he had come to proclaim as the one message worth telling? It is a study for every Christian apologist, for every Chris-

tian missionary, for every Christian minister. I suppose that some of those who have objected to the Parliament of Religions would have found great fault with Paul for quoting heathen philosophers, and setting the seal of his approval to what they said. How could any one ever have complimented these empty-hearted, though overburdened Athenians upon their being too religious! But Paul is all things to all men, and he catches them; he gets their attention at least long enough to tell them that the things he had come to proclaim were what they were hungering for, the things of the risen life, and he tells them of the resurrection from the dead. He is a splendid type of what intellectual Christianity ought to be, because, bringing as he did all things to Christ, and laying all things upon that altar, his intellectual life is a means to an end, and that only. There is a tendency in us to grade all things.

We say, "How much higher is the artistic than the purely intellectual; how much higher the intellectual than the practical! How nice it is to see men who have been absorbed in business give now their time to intellectual work!" As though intellectual work were any better than business! There would be no intellectual work if there were no business. And so we set ourselves up in little exclusive ranks, — the agricultural, the poor farmer, he is one class by himself, — and lose sympathy entirely in our arbitrary, exclusive distinctions, which ought to be lost in the feeling that humanity is one, that there is no man mean in the sight of God. Intellectual work may be as exclusive, as selfish, as ignoble, as material, as debased, as any other work in the world if it is not brought to the altar of Christ; if it is not sanctified by the presence of God's Holy Spirit; if it is not unselfish, and wholly unselfish, as a

means to some greater end for the great throbbing life of which we are a part, and from which to cut ourselves off is spiritual suicide. God is in life, and if we would come in contact with God we must be in contact with that life which is his, and is all around us.

So then, whatever may be our intellectual attainments, we have only to compare ourselves with Omnipotence to realize how pitiable and painfully stupid the wisest among men have been in all the ages. How puerile seems the reason we have counted fine! how mistaken the dogmas men have said would last forever! how utterly wrong the generalizations men have thought they had established! Let us prostrate ourselves before God, and find that the intellect is of use only as God takes it and enlightens it and makes it the means, as he made Paul's splendid intellect the means, for making known the message of salva-

tion through a risen Lord to a world lying in wickedness.

And this also is to be learned from Paul, that throughout his life he not only seemed to use his intellectual life as a means to an end, but he never misused it. It is never thrust upon us, it is kept ever as a means to an end, and he is constantly and forever surrendering it to the one thing, — to the voice within him that speaks to men, and tells them that right is right and wrong is wrong to all eternity.

So Paul used his intellect, and I believe that in the using of it for the purposes of Christ it received not only baptism but training; that even for the purposes of the intellect, to surrender it to God is the best thing we can do. I believe this is true along the whole range of life. It was when art began to be practised merely for art's sake that it not only became decadent, but the na-

tional life became decadent. Mr. Ruskin points out, but to me seems to offer no adequate explanation of the fact, that at the time art has reached its highest expression, the national life has seemed generally to be most decadent, as in the Augustan era, the Renaissance in Italy, the period of Queen Anne in England. This, however, seems to me to be one of the solutions of it, that the age was decadent because art was practised simply for art's sake, and intellectualism was practised merely for the intellect's sake. As soon as a man attends to his body merely for his own sensuous bodily purposes, just so soon not only is there decadence of the best that is in him, but there will be decadence of the body, decadence of the mind, decadence of all that is essential to real life; and if art must express life, that life must be divine to be worth expressing, and until we learn to treasure what is divine, we shall find our-

selves again and again upon the weary slope up which men have crawled with so much difficulty only to find the burden dragging them down when they believed they saw eternity from the top.

God needs our intellects, and never more so than to-day. We need to surrender our intellects to God that the pressing problems of the Church may be solved. We stand divided. We have been hair-splitting and fighting among ourselves, and the great world outside neither fears nor hates us. There is no task more precious in the sight of God to-day than the task the men of intellect have before them in the solving of problems whose solution will unite us once more in the face of the enemy, and thrust us, even if we be cut in pieces, in the face of the foe with the banner of Christ and his Cross over us. Young men, some of you with educational advantages of which to your dying day you will have

to render an account unto the Father, take these advantages, take your minds, and make them a sacrifice upon the altar of the Lord Jesus Christ. There is no more splendid use of the consecrated, surrendered intellect than the solving of the weary social problems that lie before us. Christ saw how it would be with us. He said, "The poor ye have always with you, but me ye have not always." It is just because Christ is not always with us that the poor are always with us. We have problems that need more than mere goodness, that need more than impulsive Christianity, that need more than simply the heart that goes out in pity and sympathy; we need surrendered intellects; we need consecrated brains; we need directing minds baptized from on high; we need you business men to take and reform our accursed social and industrial conditions. Must man be ever groaning

in the weary tread-mill of life, finding those who are on the top corrupted by the eminence, and those below ground to death by the weight? The world needs your intellects set on fire from on high, and never more than to-day. We need to surrender them to God. What the world needs is not surrender to a church, nor to a priest, nor to a theological school, nor to a general assembly, but to God only. "Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again in the yoke of bondage." That surrender must be absolute. Who are we that we should strive with the Almighty? Who are we to think that we are sufficient in ourselves? Our only use, our only dignity, our only worth, will come from our lives being the expression of the divine life which breathes into our human minds the message of God's love for his fallen creation. For God can redeem it, if it will

only suffer itself to be redeemed. God over all — even though he is crucified — preached to all nations. God over all, and Christ at the right hand of the Father, who will come again to receive a redeemed universe gathered into his Church that we may be his sons and daughters.

Dear friends! Young men! Young women! what are you doing with your minds? What are you doing with your culture? What are you doing with the life God has given you? What are you doing with your advantages? These things are responsibilities which will weigh you down before the judgment-seat unless you share them with Christ, unless you are working his law in the world. May God help you to do it!

VI.

THE ETHICAL TYPE OF CHRISTIANITY.

Take, brethren, for an example of suffering and of patience, the prophets who spake in the name of the Lord. — JAS. v. 10.

I HAVE taken this text because the type of Christian life represented by James is as it were, the connecting link between the Old Testament and the New. The logic of the life of Christ, of his teachings and sufferings, was a glorious manifestation of that liberty which is in Christ Jesus, and of which we see Paul to be so splendid a type. But Christ himself left those who were to come after him, under the guidance of the Spirit promised, to find their way to the logic of that position. He himself attended the synagogue; he proclaimed himself as the

fulfilment and not the destruction of the Old Testament; and it is very easy for us to leave the light of the New Testament and greatly exaggerate the gap that separates the Old and New Testaments from each other. We might very easily altogether misunderstand the New Testament or misinterpret the Old by taking either of them separately, not remembering that in the revelation of himself God has used the Old Testament as a preparation, and that the full importance of this revelation is only to be realized when we view it as developed in Jesus Christ in the New Testament.

There was a section of the Christian Church that was not in accord with the complete logic of the Christian position as set forth by Paul. It was very natural that the Jewish Christian church should resent many things, find fault with many things, and fail to understand

many things that came quite naturally to the Christian Church that had broken loose more completely from the old life that still centred in Jerusalem. There was antagonism; which antagonism was bridged over by the wisdom and patience of the principal apostles; but the antagonism made itself felt, of which we have evident signs in the New Testament history itself.

It is James that represents a type of thought that is the intermediate link between the old dispensation and the new, as represented by the Jewish Christian wing of the Church. It was only after the destruction of Jerusalem that the Church, as it were, broke into the fulness of the life, the fulness of the liberty, the glory of the revealed form of Christ's gospel. James, however, represents a type of Christian life that, with all its limitations, with all its necessary defects, has had a very glorious history

in God's Church, a history that is not yet completed. The type represented by James will, I believe, always have its message and its mission to the Christian world. James represents what we might know as the Puritan type of the Christian life, — a type of Christian character whose praises have been sung and whose limitations have been pointed out so frequently, that it has become to us usually either a bugbear on the one hand, or an idol on the other. The truth is between the two. The Puritan type of Christian character had its invaluable message to the Christian world; it had a heroic work; and with all its limitations, its work may have to be done over and over again by its resurrection in the Church of God, speaking, warning, and living the life which has proved in the crises of the Church's history of such momentous importance.

The limitations of the Puritan type of Christian life lie somewhat on the sur-

face. There is an attachment to the formal elements that has its cause in the history of the rise of the Puritan type. It rose as a protest. The Jewish Christian church was also a protest. This church did not seek to separate itself from the synagogue, nor from the sacrifices and the temple. To the very end it worshipped at the temple. Paul goes up at the demand of the Jewish Christian church to fulfil his vows, taking part in the temple services. They were the reform party in the Jewish church,—a party that did not care to break loose from the old, but sought to rehabilitate it, sought to breathe into it a newer spirit, protesting against its weakness and rottenness; and in that protest there are the elements of some of the limitations which have marked them. They became the protesting or Protestant church, missing some of the tenderness, and much of the formative spirit, and in the very vigor of

their assaults becoming critical and destructive, rather than formative, in their character.

This weakness may be seen, I think, in what the Puritan type has done for England, where it has appeared more frequently and in greater purity than in any other Christian civilization. The Puritan type there has attached itself to certain individual and distinct reforms. It has begun in protesting against particular lines of thought; it has had its force and strength from its pointed, direct, and uncompromising attack upon particular and visible evils. In doing this, whether it gained its point or lost it, it has been in danger from this undue emphasis upon its purely protesting character, and in the second and third and fourth generations of Puritanism the danger has been that each generation lived more and more upon the protest and the traditions of the past, and so failed to comprehend the

new duty which was to take the place of the things which had been destroyed. Hence it has been that Puritanism too often in the life of the second or third generation has been marked by a vacuum which has not always been filled with those things which were most useful to the Christian Church as a whole.

Then, also, this ever protesting characacter of the Puritan type has always brought with it the danger of a certain sternness in its righteousness, that sometimes has produced a sense of self-righteousness and censoriousness extremely detrimental to the entirety of character. In the protesting, there has been a constant tendency to self-assertion, first, indeed as against the world and evil, a self-assertion that is justified by facts; but then, as a consequence of that, a self-assertion as against any one that differs with it,— a self-assertion too apt to regard anything that opposes it as necessarily

an evil. Hence, there has always been in the literature of Puritanism in its later manifestations a certain narrowness that has been one of the marked weaknesses often pointed out. There has also been a certain lack of tenderness, a certain lack of the fine flavor that characterizes Paul, for instance, and still more John in his writings; a tenderness one feels to be indeed out of place upon some battle-fields; a tenderness that it is only natural that men should lay aside when they enter into the sterner contests that Puritanism has so often waged. At the same time a lack of this tenderness has left Puritanism often out of touch with the newer life, has isolated it, has made it often the embodiment of a religious type that withdraws itself from the world in a way in which Christ did not withdraw himself from the world. This has exposed it to the charges of bigotry and straight-lacedness, and even of hypocrisy, because in

its isolation being out of touch with the world, not in sympathy with the movements round about it, it has often yielded unconsciously to other evils than those against which it was called into being to protest against. And so it has exposed itself to the ready charge of deep inconsistency; and, as we see in the representative Puritanism of England, two or three times these charges have been so successfully emphasized that Puritanism seemed for the time to have lost all its moral and religious value.

After we have pointed out these limitations, it will be proper also to remind you that the type of Christianity which we have called Puritanism, and which I think is here represented in James, has its mission and its message. This very righteousness is the glory of such a letter as this, and the Puritan theocracy at the time of Cromwell has as its glory and its strength, that it emphasized certain ele-

ments in our Christian life that have too often failed of emphasis when the Church has been either prosperous, or swinging along in an easy rut. Often have men failed to see, what the Puritan type sees clearly, the danger and the ruts that lie so much in front of us all along the way. James has a message, first, to those who are tempted and tried; and there is in his message a little of that stern impatience with the weakness of the unstable man. There is something of the rigor and vigor of the Puritan spirit which feels that manhood means courage and strength, and that Christian manhood is to be undaunted courage and undaunted strength. What do you lack? Why do you whine? Why do you complain? Let a man rather count himself as in the way of grace when he is in the way of trials and temptations. If he lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth freely to every man; but be brave, cour-

ageous and undaunted; know this, that our God is a consuming fire, and in his strength we may have hope and grace for ever and for evermore. There is some fibre, there is some muscle, there is some strength, there is some vigor, in the very type of doctrine that is represented by James, and which has been emphasized with such care by the Puritan type throughout Christian history. There is need of that message. Constantly ought we to emphasize this need for vigor; for an undaunted and unflinching courage of our convictions, a courage to do right, a righteousness that trusts forever, that does not waver, a conception of Jehovah as King of kings and Lord of lords, with whom to fight, for whom to struggle is blessedness and courage itself. Let not that man who doubteth think he shall receive anything: he is like the surge of the sea, driven by the wind and tossed. It was not characteristic of the

Puritan to be tossed around like the wave of the sea. Over and over again he has unsheathed his sword and stood for that which he considered right and against wrong and iniquity even in high places. There is a message of Puritanism that rings down English history which has given strength to the democracy, which has not feared king or priest, which has not feared traditions, which has feared nothing but Jehovah; a note that we need here from time to time amidst our notes of triumphs and rejoicings. Our victory over sin is not completed; we have still to see struggles; righteousness is not yet crowned; the cross is yet to be borne. Protestantism has its struggles yet before it. I verily believe that in this country the time will come when there will be need again for the Puritan spirit. It will be a blessing to this country when men stand up for righteousness, seeking one another, and

standing united for the justice of God, and when they feel that this letter of James is an epistle of inspiration upon which they can base their claims for a higher life, a higher purity, a higher freedom from the subtle corruptions and temptations which so often sap the Christian manhood, which so often weaken the Christian character.

And again, Puritanism has some special messages. I think it is rather characteristic of the Puritan spirit that it does pick out and specially emphasize special evils. James has a message to the different classes, — to the wealthy in danger of abusing their wealth, to the intelligent in danger of relying upon their intellects, to those in high places in danger of counting these things more than the honor of Christ, — a message to the mere will worker, to the mere talker, a message to the man whose tongue is unbridled, whose character is loose. These things

need emphasis. These things need sometimes the scourge of just such a holy indignation as we see in the message of James. There is a time in our own individual life when it would be well for us to take this message of the old Puritan spirit as interpreted to us by James, and read it page by page, line by line, and say to ourselves, "Does that cut me? Does that touch my life? Is that a message to my spirit which I need to give heed to, that the man of God may be approved, 'thoroughly furnished unto all good works'?" James has a message, as the Puritan party has always had a message, to the Church. The Puritan party has risen in all the various denominations of Christendom. There is a Puritan party that rose in the Lutheran church, a Puritan party that rose in the church of England, and a Puritan party in the Presbyterian church. In England, the Independents and the Brownists have

been the evangelical life which has moulded the Church that largely represents the Puritan spirit. It is in the English democracy to-day you see it; you read it in its literature, you feel it in the democracy of England, which has as its best foundation stone the old Puritan spirit. This type, broadened, I hope softened, more purely sanctified, more rounded by contact with other types of Christian life, but preserving throughout something of the manhood and vigor that marks the type, has yet a great message to the world. The message to the Church is very distinct, very pointed. Sometimes there is criticism. The Church is subject often to criticism that is captious, that is a mere excuse for not taking up the duties of the Church. The Church is criticised by many who have no intention whatsoever of making any sacrifices to bring her back to that perfection and idealism whose lack they complain about.

Such criticism is unreal, unnecessary, and imperfect. But there is also a criticism of ourselves and of the Church which has in it healing, if it comes in the same way as the criticism of James; in other words, if it comes from a heart that represents the hope of the Church, from a love that is intertwined with the life of the Church, and if it comes out of the very yearning for that which is living, and pure, and better than the past. Such criticism is a saving element in the life of the Church; and such critics, far from being cast out of the synagogue, far from having their message or themselves despised, should be hailed as an evidence of the real vitality of the Church, — evidence that God's spirit is still speaking in the conscience of the Church, recalling it to lost duty, pleading with it to take up more fully the duties God would have us do. Such, then, are the criticisms of James. It would be well for us

to weigh at our leisure in detail such criticisms as we find in the very bold, very pointed, very startling language of Puritanism, reproduced all through history, and finding its warrant in this letter of James. For it has been the spirit of Puritanism, and one of the notes that have marked its life, that it has ever been lifting up and advocating the establishing here on earth of a New Testament theocracy, to complete the vision, to prepare the way for the coming of our Lord. Now, we do not share the hopes in every particular of the Puritans who desired a theocracy at the time of Cromwell, because the theocracy that they desired had very marked limitations, and because we have an instinctive feeling that any such theocracy would sooner or later, like the religious society of that time, prove a failure. In some way the Jewish Christian church however, has never lost hope that it exists to found a theocracy.

The Jewish Christian church fondly believed that Christ was to come to Jerusalem, appearing in person to establish his kingdom; that all nations would come up to Jerusalem; that under the banner of the Messias come again in power, the Christian Church might know itself redeemed through Judah; that, the regenerated tribes once more restored, the mission of the Christ would be completed. I am not sure that Paul did not share that hope in his early ministry, but, as you can see from the second letter to the Corinthians, and from his later writings, especially the pastoral epistles, that hope had taken a spiritualized form, just as the hope of the Church to-day has taken a spiritualized form, and we no longer desire to see church and state identified, doing one for the other the offices of that theocracy we may have once desired. But we have lost something indeed; we have lost much; and our position, I

think, will have to be taken upon higher ground than we have stood on yet. We should still cherish the hope of the theocracy; we should still hope for such a union of Church and State that the lines will run so parallel that there will be no fear of friction, no fear of hypocrisy, no fear of mere formalism. So long as the State has secular power outside the influences of Christianity, so long we have not as a church done our full duty. We must seek to permeate the State with Christian principles; we must seek to secure the State for Christ; we must make these United States the re-incarnation of the divine spirit. However glorious the stars and stripes may be, however right that we sacrifice our life for our country, we must see to it that the cross of Jesus Christ is still supreme; and the best offering that we can bring will be the stars and stripes baptized from on high, washed from the stains of

past history, that these United States may be a splendid offering brought to Jehovah, the seal of the triumph of the suffering and patience of our Lord, — such a theocracy as the kingdom that passed before the vision, not of the old Puritan of Cromwell's time, but such as passed before the vision of the inspired James. He too has a message to the nations concerning the kingdom; he too has somewhat to say of a national righteousness, and of the kingdom that God is building, to those of you who long for the righteousness which is of Christ. Let us feel that that righteousness is to be a purifying fire; that in our hearts it is to burn and burn until our lives are moulded into the form of the life of Jesus Christ, as the melted iron is moulded. Let us feel that love for righteousness, a burning desire to hold to the cross of our Saviour, is to be a purifying passion, inspiring us and speaking to us as the voice

of God in conscience, making it impossible for us to swerve from the path of duty, because Jehovah, our God, is ever present with us in all our temptations, strengthening us in the hour of struggle. Is there any one reading this who has not made that surrender? Oh! I beseech you to make surrender of your life to this Christ, unto this passion for righteousness and purity, that you may feel your muscles braced and your hearts stirred within you to seek the higher, the new, the diviner life, the breathings and whisperings of which are now moving amongst the nations. Oh! may God grant that when the time comes for struggles and conflicts, when the time comes for the establishing of the completed theocracy, the inspiration of James may be the inspiration of the Church, that we may lift the cross as the banner of the victory of our God.

VII.

THE MYSTIC TYPE OF CHRISTIANITY.

No man hath beheld God at any time: if we love one another, God abideth in us, and his love is perfected in us: hereby know we that we abide in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his spirit. — 1 JOHN iv. 12.

IN the formation of primitive Christianity Paul has only one possible rival, and that is John. So far as the intellectual side of Christianity is concerned, Paul stands unrivalled as a formative element and factor. Probably Peter had a more active part in the formation of the external organization of Christianity than the record shows. He probably did much to forward the formation of many churches, without leaving large records of his activity; for it is scarcely credible that Peter should have maintained in

the Church's tradition and history the place he has upon so slender a foundation as that which we find recorded in the New Testament. It must have been very largely as an executive, practical man, that he left his mark and imprint upon the Church, which circumstance would explain perchance that it was mainly upon the Roman church that he left this mark. The Roman mind, being practical and executive, would naturally fall readily under the influence of that particular apostle, to whom in God's providence possibly had been committed something of the formation of the government by which the Church was to be strengthened and consolidated. However that may be, Peter is preserved rather in tradition than in record, but John and Paul go down in the records as the two main formative agents in organized Christianity. They were men, however, of very different types. John's

limitations were rather on the side of that logical, philosophical, and intellectual character which was so pronounced in Paul. I presume that John, for instance, would have had comparatively little influence over some of the elements in the Church's life that Paul has moulded. Indeed, it appears that in the third and fourth centuries of the Roman branch of the Church, John was an almost forgotten factor. In the Greek church, however, John takes the place that in the Latin church has been so largely taken by Paul. John is to a very large degree the dominant element throughout the Greek theology, which has been so neglected by Protestant theologians. A great deal of the disturbance in the theological atmosphere around us now comes from the fact that there has been a revival of Greek theology and of the Greek spirit in Protestantism. We are feeling on all sides the power and influence of this

Greek revival. Once before the Church felt the influence of a pagan renaissance of Greek thought almost absolutely untouched by Christian ideas. To-day we are feeling the influence of the Greek-Christian thought that has been so deeply and permanently affected by the spirit of John. The conception of the Johannean gospel has opened our eyes to large realms of truth entirely neglected in the history of nineteen centuries of Christianity. Once Dr. Hitchcock said, to the class he was instructing in history, that the Church had seen Petrine theology in her organization, and Pauline theology in her creeds, and now he felt, though he felt it only dimly, that we were entering upon a third period of theological struggle, marked by the ascendant influence of John. He thought the Johannean type would be dominant only when the treasures buried now in the Johannean writings had become the treasures of the

Church. I think we may look further, beyond that prophecy even, and hope for a time when we shall see the Church doing what the New Testament does, placing the elements all together, finding for them all their proper provinces, giving to every type of thought that has its source in the divine mind its proper place as a formative element in the Church's life and organization, and making the Church the expression of a national longing for righteousness. If only we do that, we shall find that we are united as one spirit existing under wide diversity. As we have limitations or capacity, we shall enter more or less fully into the thought of the entire New Testament, and James and Peter, and John and Paul will widen and instruct us, giving us more glorious conceptions of the fulness of the revelation which is in Christ Jesus than has been possible for us to achieve in our very narrow

conceptions touching the New Testament revelation of God as it is in Christ. We shall see the need of room for wide differences of opinion and statement.

Were we to depend upon John simply, there would be something lacking of the practical Christianity which we saw so pronouncedly in James, and the statements of James are open to serious criticism taken alone. John lays down the law of love. He emphasizes it as it had not been emphasized before in New Testament literature. But if you will read John through, the fourth gospel, and the three letters assuming the Johannean authorship, you will be struck with the thought that there is a class of minds who would find his teaching extremely unpractical. These persons would say to themselves, I have no doubt, "I feel it is true I ought to love my brother, but how am I to love my brother? How am I to show my love?" Were we to rely

upon John alone, we should have very little light upon that question. We shall have then to turn to James, and find that he translates into very strong language the rules and spiritual considerations of John, and gives voice to the practical every-day application of the truth which John saw in such fulness and with such spiritual clearness. So it is very well for us that we are not left simply to John for a conception of that revelation of God in Jesus Christ. It is a great blessing that we have John to give us such a spiritual interpretation of the historic man Christ Jesus as we cannot find even in Paul, because Paul knew only the risen Christ, and such as we cannot find even in the synoptic gospels, because the writers of the synoptic gospels were men of limited horizons in many directions, and of little comprehension along some lines of what the real teaching of Jesus was; which we cannot get in James either, because of

the Judaistic limitations which prevented James from entering into the fulness of the spiritual truth which we find to be in John. John was the beloved disciple. I do not believe that was because of his marked gentleness of character, as some have thought, for we find that John is characterized as the Son of Thunder. He is one also of the impulsive disciples. He it was who would have called down fire from heaven to avenge an insult. He was the beloved disciple surely because he leaned upon Jesus' bosom, because he was able to enter into the thought of Christ and comprehend his mystic sayings. He did not need to have the proverbs unfolded to him as the rather weaker intelligence of the other disciples required they should be. He was one of that inner circle into which Peter was taken, James and John and Peter going with their Master into the presence of the Transfiguration! going

with their Master into the death chamber! sharing the secret counsels of the Master, who could not unfold his whole teachings to the dull and somewhat commonplace minds of the other disciples round about him.

John knew Christ, he felt Christ, he intuitively leaped to the conclusion even before Christ finished all his teaching. He alone was able to give us such conversations as that between Nicodemus and Christ. Mark could hardly have faithfully portrayed that scene. It is doubtful whether Matthew would have understood it much better than Nicodemus, where we find Christ opening to the mind of Nicodemus the mysteries of that spiritual contact between the spirit of God and the spirit of man which is the contact of history, of which history is but the unfolding. It was John that was able best to enter into the mysteries of that new birth, which means the regene-

ration and changing of the whole thought of man about God, and the formation of that character which is the Divine intent from the beginning. Who else could have given us the scene of the woman of Samaria? And there are often touches which we should be surprised, I think, to find in Luke or in Mark or in Matthew, — touches of spiritual insight, of the comprehension of the fulness of the gospel of our Lord and Saviour which strikes us as being unique, and these touches mark at once the teaching of that apostle who had entered more than any other into the spiritual character of our Lord and Saviour.

And so it is that the picture we have of Christ from the hand of John deals mainly with his Jerusalem ministry, because in his Jerusalem ministry Christ unfolded more than at any other time the real spiritual Messianic kingdom which he had come to found. It was the Jeru-

salem ministry that most revealed to John the spiritual thought he unfolds to us. Christ is for him the divine Messias who had come to his own and his own received him not; who poured out his soul in the death agony of the wondrous prayer which John has given to us as a priceless treasure in the seventeenth chapter of his gospel. I think we should be surprised to find in Mark or in Matthew or in James such a chapter as the fourteenth of John; and yet surely without the fourteenth of John there would be lacking much of the revelation of the depth of the love of Jesus Christ, and the assurance that was in him of union with the Father, which was from the beginning and unto eternity. "I am in the Father and the Father in me. If ye have seen me, ye have seen the Father. Why sayest thou then, Show us the Father?"

Any one who has attentively studied the language of the fourth gospel will

see at once that there can be little question as to the genuine character of the three letters, whatever he may think of the Apocalypse. They are in the spirit, nay, they are in the very language of the fourth gospel. Whoever wrote the one, wrote the others. In the first letter of John, we have the emphasis laid again and again upon that which formed for John the basis of his religious life, the enthusiasm of love. What is Christianity? It is impossible for us to define it in a word. We have to define it as the contact in and through Christ with God. We might also define it in its outward aspect as the new enthusiasm for good that was brought into the world by the divine manifestation of the Christ. It is enthusiasm, the divine enthusiasm of love, which John makes the basis of his message to all time.

We cannot live for the most part upon what is known as doctrine, useful as doc-

trine is in its place; we cannot live upon forms and ceremonies, useful as forms and ceremonies may be. We cannot live upon law, although law has its place. If we are to be loving Christians, if we are really to do the work of God, our souls must be stamped with something of the same divine enthusiasm which will burn away within us the dross, which will make us the children of the loving Father, which will send us seeking over the wide world for the service of the Master, that we may be united with him in this divine love, and feel that in love alone can we find union with the Father, that only through love can we know what God is, for God is love.

This is, I think, the real meaning of John's message. His message was an emphasis upon love, — the law of love is the law of life. In one of the Buddhist writings, the Suttas, that especially sets forth the message of Buddha to the learned

Brahmins, there is a wonderful chapter upon what is known as Universal Love, and Buddha describes universal love as being a factor in life which the learning of the Brahmins had left out. Confucius dwells upon love as one of the factors of life. We have in Confucius the Golden Rule on its negative sides. The Avesta teaches love as one of the elements out of which the perfect world is formed and the absence of which marks the lower world, which forms the dualism of the Zend-Avesta system. But nowhere that I have been able to discover, in Buddhist literature, or in the writings of Confucius, or in Plato, or anywhere else, is love laid down as John lays it down, not only as a law and element in life, but as the law of life, the very essence of life, the very being of God, the very evidence of God to the hearts of men that He really exists. There is an infidelity which is the infidelity of a half-truth, an infidelity

that would try to make us believe that God is something else, that he is sovereignty, or decrees, or law, or judgment, with love thrown in to temper all these things. This is the pagan conception, resulting always in some form of either intellectual or practical dualism. We have had many a caricature of God. According to the picture that John has drawn of him, God is not decree, he is not sovereignty, he is not law primarily, he is love, and his very decrees are the outcome of his love. He is sovereignty because he has proclaimed the sovereignty of love, and this law of love is the law of life. This is the message that is revealed to the Church, the law of love, the emphasis upon which comes to us with tremendous and distinct power as we open the pages of John and find that he emphasizes only more distinctly and exclusively that which Paul too recognized as central in his system, which James

too recognized as central for him, which unites the writings of the New Testament into one splendid chorus of praise to Jehovah who sitteth on high, — which is light! which is love! which is God! Walk ye in it.

The second characteristic of John's teaching is the emphasis he places upon what we describe as the intuitive type of Christian character. Paul is reasoning with the Romans and the Jews. He sought to lead the intellects of the Romans and Jews to enter into the secrets of the Most High. For Paul there were many entrances into the mysteries of God's reigning. There was the historical. History was to Paul the steady unfolding of the life of God. Philosophy had meaning for Paul as an entrance into the secrets of the Most High under the guidance of God's spirit. Law had for Paul special meaning as an entrance into the method of the Divine Life. For John

these things may have had theoretically their place, but for him and for his peculiar temperament there was practically one access only. He knew God, — "For I have beheld him; I have seen him." He does not need to dwell upon history or philosophy or law. That might help others, that was necessary to others, no doubt; but John had seen Christ; he needed no other testimony. He had beheld him. He knew him, not as Paul, who had a vision, who knew best the risen Christ, and then had been strengthened throughout the years of his pilgrimage, but because he had sat with him: "The things which our eyes have beheld, that which we teach, that which we know and declare unto you to be the manifestation of God." So he entered at once without process into the secrets of the Most High. There must be that element in all Christian life. I do not suppose it is equally developed in all of

us. Some of us are sceptical by nature; if we find God at all it must be through weary reasoning, walking with tired feet along the beaten road of controversy. But those more blessed, those sometimes whom the world has despised, the mystics, the women in their solitude and in their suffering, tender children in their ignorance, and sufferers on beds of pain, to whom such weary wandering would be impossible, these have known the blessedness of entering at once, as John did, into the life and love of him whom to see was to know and believe, because God had given him of his Spirit. God is love. His love is perfected in us. "Hereby know we that we abide in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit." Shall we not sometimes in the heavenly world, if we are permitted to reflect upon our past, wonder at some of the processes that we were pleased to call intellectual by which we tried to

understand the workings of the divine mind? All around us, was God and we knew it not; all around us were opportunities of love that we never entered into. All around was the life of God, and because, forsooth, it walked and talked and spoke as we did, we never knew it!

The early Church had as its spirit that which the Church in the moments of her forgetfulness and infidelity has sometimes not fully realized, that Christianity is a divine inspiration, a divine contact, — not an inspiration for the apostles only, not in the New Testament only, not only in the first three centuries of the Church, but a divine contact now and always. "I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." The question for our consideration is, What is the character of your inspiration? rather than, What is the character of the inspiration of the canonical books? We are far more likely to be unsound and infidel on the question

of the possibility of God's inspiring you and me to do his work in the world, than on the question of the possibility of his having inspired those who have passed to their rest, and have left the record of their inspiration as a heritage to God's children. We need to feel the power that John felt, the baptism of the Holy Spirit bringing us into contact with God the Father of spirits, that we be no dead memories of the past, but be living channels of the present, telling men of the judgment that is round about us, speaking to men's hearts of the awful and fearful neglects and dangers of the present, and the consequences of such neglects in the past.

John knew him because he had seen him. We, too, shall be able to make men see Christ when we too have beheld him, and have entered into the secret places of the Most High God through contact of our spirit with Jesus Christ. We

must be the incarnation of God's living love. We must know God as Love, because he has revealed himself in our spirits, and daily we take up our cross and follow him, becoming like him, seeing him as he is, knowing him, having him dwell in us, and his Spirit to direct us forever and ever more.

This is the message of John; and it is not a past message; it is a message to our hearts to-day. Would you know God? Know him as Love. Would you feel him? Have him in you. Would you live the life that God would have you live, — the life of love? "If any man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar. For he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God, whom he hath not seen?" May God help us to feel the inspiration, to know the baptism, to walk in the love and light that is reflected from the face of Jesus Christ our Master.

VIII.

THE THREE CROSSES ON CALVARY.

And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, Art not thou the Christ? save thyself and us. But the other answered, and rebuking him said, Dost thou not even fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. — LUKE xxiii. 39–43.

IT was a strange circumstance that thus linked the life and death of those two unknown robbers with the life of one who was to form the centre of history. We do not even know their names. The traditions about them are somewhat confused; but we find them here the victims with Christ of the cruelty and barbarism of the age in which they lived. They are called rob-

bers, and no doubt belonged to that class for which Barrabas stood, half robber, half rebel against the existing condition of things, a product of their time, much as Robin Hood was a product of his time, much as the bandits of Sicily to-day are a product of the misgovernment in that part of the world. For, after all, character is a strange synthesis of various factors, and it is quite impossible for us to analyze a character exactly and deal out to each factor its particular share of importance. There is heredity of which we have heard so much, and there is also a personality of which we are, I have no doubt, soon to hear quite as much as once we heard of heredity, as one of the foremost evolutionists of Germany has already pointed out that there could be no progress unless there were new factors in some way evolved out of the old, for unless there are some new factors, there can be no advance over heredity and

environment. You cannot take out more than you find in.

We shall be glad to call that creative factor, personality or will, the element that gives responsibility, the element that should sit enthroned, that should use all circumstances but as a means to work out the highest in human life. There are social conditions, environment, and education. These, too, are important factors, but if we permit the will to be enslaved by lust, selfishness, and other passions, these things become dominant, and we become slaves to those that should be but our servants in the progress of righteousness.

So, no doubt, it would only be the almighty wisdom of God that could separate, in the life of this poor thief hanging in his misery, the victim of the cruelty of the time, between the factors that went to make him the character that he was. Social suffering and environment had something to do with it. No doubt in-

herent tendencies had something to do with it. No doubt the surrender of his will had much to do with the melancholy state in which he finds himself. What interests us most, however, is to find what is the effect of this his treatment, what is the result upon the man of the measures that society took to prevent him from being any more a menace to the safety of the community. We find that the poor fellow is but the more hardened and injured by the course that is taken, and the presence of Christ but seems to stir the ill feelings within him all the more, and he delights in railing at his fellow-victim upon the cross. In the gospel there is no hint of the reason for the state of mind in which he finds himself. It must have been some bitter thought, or some very strange unconscious feeling in him which suggested his railing cries. He might perhaps say to himself: "Had I only possessed the

personal magnetism of that leader; had I only been able to work the miracles that he claimed to do; if I only had obtained the ear of the multitude as he did; had a party in North Galilee been at my call, — do you think that I would have submitted to the Roman power as he has cravenly submitted to it? Do you think that I would have permitted myself to fall into the hands of those who hate me and my people? I at least bared my sword! I at least haunted the highways, and so long as my weakness would let me, I fought the tyranny that is crushing the Jewish people. I did my little best to make known that there was still manhood in Judaism. But this poor teacher, he claims to be the Christ, the Saviour, the Messias! If he is the Messias, let him come down from the cross and save himself and us! But how can I follow any such craven leadership? I am glad that the multitudes cried, 'Away with him!'"

Such a process of thought would no doubt do much not only to harden the man's heart, but to blind him to the high meaning of Christ's death; and physical agony and defeat and humiliation and shame only deepened and emphasized all that was bad in the man. His conflicts with society, his outlawry, his wildly obeyed impulses to disobedience, these things crowded in upon his life, and all the worst elements of the man's character were but intensified by his suffering.

That cross of Calvary is an example of unsanctified suffering such as the world has very often seen since. There are those who to-day are suffering, as there have been those who have suffered all down history, from the injustice, wrongs, and barbarism of the time. This suffering has sometimes been but dimly understood. Sometimes it has found a voice in a leadership saying very much the

same things as were on the lips of those poor sufferers on Calvary. This unsanctified suffering does but harden men's hearts. There are many to-day just as bitter as these thieves who rebelled against Rome! And in all ages there have been poor criminals who in their wild despair have wreaked savage vengeance upon those who have thus ignorantly and harshly entreated them. We know very well how easy it is for men to emphasize all that is wrong in the social condition round about, how easy and how natural it is for us to lay upon the social condition and environment, upon the things that are external, the blame of what they and we are. When we are prosperous and successful in our business and things go well with us, when everything is very much as we should plan it, then we pat ourselves upon the back and say, "See how shrewd and clever a business man I am! What wonderful pro-

fessional success I have! How well I have dealt with the circumstances of my life!" But when the adversary overtakes us, when adversity enters into our soul, then we look outside ourselves for the explanation of our misfortunes, because we cannot bear to divide the responsibility as it ought to be divided between the things outside and the things within. And to-day all the factors that have disturbed human history and soaked it in blood and selfishness are at work in our land. There is danger of our adopting to-day merely that which Rome sought to adopt as a cure for all the evils. To-day there is danger of lack, or even of entire absence, of sympathy with those who suffer, with those who are wronged, with those who feel with fearful bitterness and passion all their wrongs; and it is an awful condition of things when these wrongs are driven home on the one side, and those who are more or less con-

sciously oppressing the weak are out of touch with them, and hardening their hearts have sought to array themselves against them.

I remember once a passionate, nervous boy, in ill health, being tormented in mere play by two or three stronger than he. I remember the passionate fury and hate that burnt in that boy's face, a sense of helplessness and wrong no doubt that changed everything in him. There was murder in his heart. It was only weakness that prevented him doing anything to wreak savage vengeance. At last, springing at one of those who were his tormentors, he half drew and half flung him over the stairs with himself, and they fell down together. I remember, I shall never forget it, the white, drawn face of my comrade as I saw one limb was doubled under him and he could not move, and I thought how easily that fall might have killed him. Then, alas!

when it was too late, remorse came. Oh! the passions that are roused in hearts that burn and cry and curse all the more as their wrong is seen. And when force meets force, when the conflict is over and the French Revolution has done its worst, then superior shrewdness and force has but to stretch on crueller crosses the weaker elements they have wronged.

So history has still the cross of Calvary, still hears the cry of the poor thief railing in his misery at the helpless victim whom he would at one time gladly, no doubt, have summoned to his aid if that aid had been the sword and revenge. And then there is the other cross, with the other victim of the same passions and selfishness of his time. He, too, railed at first at the Christ in their midst, but some word of Christ's went to his heart, or some look of Christ's won his soul, and he ceased his railing, and even re-

buked his fellow sufferer: "He indeed without sin, but we justly." He takes it all to himself, all the bitterness that might have had some legitimate place as over against the wrongs he was suffering. For no crime gives any man a right to torture his fellow beings as the cross tortured them. But he has forgotten that. He feels his own sin. The justice of the sentence seems to him absolute in the presence of that which rose over his soul. "We indeed justly." No doubt he contrasted in some half-conscious way the wild scenes of violence upon the highroads, and the willing submission of this victim in the midst, and he surrenders his soul to the Christ. There was no one there to instruct him in the mysteries of Nicene orthodoxy. There was no one there to tell him what the meaning of the words he had just heard was. There was no one there to explain to him the philosophy of salvation. He

only knew that here was one to whom he could surrender his soul: "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom."

Oh! what must it have been thus to share the sufferings of Christ, — thus to be a help in the last agonies of the one perfect hero of the world's history; thus to strengthen the Christ even by a word when all others mocked him; to give the word of cheer and comfort that this poor robber must have given him; thus to give, even in the midst of his death agony, the last allegiance! Splendid was it, indeed, thus to share the sufferings of Christ, and to enter with him at once through the opened door! "To-day thou shalt be with me in Paradise!" Thus he heard the Saviour's voice speaking, throwing open the door of heaven and letting him in. Oh, what a difference in the sanctified suffering of this other cross of Calvary!

For any suffering either hardens or softens. It is one or the other. Either the rain steals into the earth, watering the roots and making them glad, or it beats it harder and harder as it falls; it is always one or the other. The world's suffering will do for the masses and for you one of two things; either it will harden and drive you away from the real life, or with broken and contrite hearts you will find, in the sorrow of the world and in the tears which you shed, the entrance into the real life, the life that is hid in Christ.

Which would you sooner be, Pilate, or that thief? Now, with all history behind you, which would you rather be, the proud Jewish hierarchy, or that robber whose very name is unknown? No justice was done to him; no doubt the crowd reviled him as before. Even religious tradition does not do justice to the poor fellow, for this is the only gospel that marks the fact

that he turned to Christ. But he had Christ in his heart, and in the touch of that unseen hand he had found the real life that passeth not away, — a peace which the world could not give, which the world could not take away even by its cruellest cross, but which is from everlasting to everlasting.

Then there was the cross that formed the centre of this picture, with the Christ praying not for himself only, but for all of us in the loneliness and bitterness of apparent defeat. It were something to defy those who are greater and stronger, and to die fighting; but to be hurried away in the midst of the night, to be stealthily dealt with, to be crucified before men could know of it, ah, that was hard! In the solitude of the cross there was the shame and agony of defeat, of broken plans, of purposes thrown aside; it was the trial of Christ's faith. "My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?"

We cannot suffer as Christ did in all points, for he was without sin, and we never to all eternity shall forget the sin that we have done. We shall never want to. Some of you have listened to the strains of the Ninth Symphony. The music opens with an impatient struggle with fate, then in calmer melancholy the music grows very simple, very rhythmic, but extremely delicate. Then you notice deeper tones and gradual earnestness, until at last all is caught up and swept together in one last glorious outburst of song. But even then, if you have listened closely, you can still hear the refrain of the minor note that sings to the very last, giving to the whole the earnestness and tenderness that makes it the most perfect of all music.

We shall enter into Paradise with God. We shall know ourselves forgiven, freely forgiven, without condition and without price, — not on the basis of any belief, not on the basis of any opinion, not on

the basis of any surrender. We are forgiven freely; all he asks is that we walk in the forgiven life, that we feel the heart of love going out, loving men even as we have been loved. But even when we join, as we may join, in the Paradise of our God, there still will be given to our song a note of earnestness. We have been forgiven freely indeed, but our hearts must go out over the world's suffering, incarnate in the sign of the cross. This suffering is our doing, its cross we must take up daily, but with the joy of deliverance. It is to this cross that you and I are to be consecrated. There is suffering about us. There is wild despair in the world. There are awful wrongs. There are fearful iniquities. How shall we go forward? With the bayonet? With the sword? With the cross on which we have drawn and tortured those that rebel against the authority which taunts them with weakness, knowing that at last in the ever-

lasting strife superior intelligence and superior force must ever in the end crucify the forces of those who seek in their weakness to throw off the yoke? Or shall we go with the look of Christ, with conquering love, even though it costs pain and toil? For that love means life, and sanctifying every tear, every sorrow, brings back to human hearts the peace that passeth not away, the joy that comes from suffering if only the sufferer knows that sympathy is there. That love lifts men up, adding grace to grace, and a sweet entrance into the fulness of the everlasting life. The greatest wrong is not the cross, the greatest wrong is the hate and bitterness that made that poor thief rail at Christ. The greatest wrong is not oppression, the greatest wrong is the hate and bitterness that oppression calls forth. The only remedy, the only thing that will stand between the two is the cross of self-sacrifice.

This will sanctify your sufferings. To this bring your experience, to this bring your powers, to this consecrate your life, that the Christ in you may look with infinite tenderness even on those who revile the divine, if perchance one among the multitude may turn to him and say, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom," finding in the very prayer a solace, and in the very agony its escape. Or you may crucify the Christ pleading to-day. The historic Christ is beyond our reach, but Christ is with us alway, and you may still crucify and taunt the real indwelling Christ and put him to an open shame; but he cannot be holden of death. He will rise in power and come in judgment to the life, whether personal or national, and who shall abide in the day of his coming? Lift up your eyes to Christ, share his death, live his righteousness, bear the world's sorrows, and share with Christ the everlasting life!

IX.

THE TEMPORAL KINGDOM.

The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make ye ready the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall become straight, and the rough ways smooth; and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.— LUKE iii. 4, 5, 6.

ALL have heard, no doubt, from pulpit and press unfair criticism of the Jewish people and the Jewish hope on the ground that they expected a temporal kingdom. They had every reason to expect a temporal kingdom. It was promised to them. The whole religious life of the Old Testament was centred in the State. The prophecies echoed and re-echoed the hope that Zion should be the dwelling-place of Jehovah, that

the scattered children of Israel should be gathered on the mountains of Judea, that all nations should come up with their offerings to Jerusalem, that Jehovah should reign in Zion and the kings of the earth should see his glory. The Christian Church would lose much if it were to brand such a hope as Judaistic or wrong. We all ought to feel that there is a glorious hope of a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness; we ought all to expect, and expect with more faith, the consummation of these prophecies of the Old Testament in the establishing of God's kingdom on earth, and work with more energy of faith for it. But I am afraid that we are just as likely as were the Jews to fall into the real mistakes that underlay their interpretation of the prophecies. These they interpreted to mean, in the first place, that the kingdom should be set up quite apart, and independent of

the ethical demands that Jehovah made upon the Jewish people. They expected that kingdom because they were the chosen people, apart from their responsibility toward Jehovah, apart from his ethical standard. So even some of those who had penetrated most into the secrets of the Old Testament and the thought of Jehovah interpreted his demands too much as a form of ritual. They thought that as long as they worshipped in the temple, and obeyed the demands of the ritual and the letter of the law, they were fulfilling all duty; the temple worship would indeed be established on the basis of ritual observance, where the law would be read daily and interpreted by the authority of the scribes. They assumed that a kingdom might be built on things external.

And they further fell into the mistake of believing that the kingdom would be national and exclusive. It would be a

Jewish kingdom as over against the world. The nations indeed might share some of the droppings from the sanctuary; some nations might be chosen out to become Jews and so enter into the privileges of the Jews; indeed, it might happen that all nations would at last be conquered, and in the conquest share the privileges of this divine kingdom. The Assyrians, whom the rod of God's anger broke, and Egypt with her people might at last worship Jehovah, but the kingdom would be to the Jews first, and to the nations afterwards.

Such a kingdom was never contemplated in the message of the more spiritual of the Old Testament prophets, nor would such a kingdom be anything but a wrong interpretation of Jehovah's law. The divine kingdom must be, in the first place, ever bound up in every fibre with the kingdom of his righteousness. It is, in fact, to be a kingdom of righteousness,

not of ritual nor of law. Some of the prophets saw that. "Jehovah is weary of your sacrifices, your blood offerings; these things are an offence to him, this is not what he wants," said they; "the temple service may be kept in its glory and beauty, but that will not satisfy the demands of the heart of Jehovah. He seeks righteousness. These things are but a means to righteousness; and as soon as they cease to be a means toward righteousness they have no meaning, nay, they are an offence."

The kingdom of the Jews is only, therefore, for a purpose. The election of the Jew is only an election to responsibility. It is a privilege, — all responsibility ought to be a privilege, — but it is a responsibility that is bound up with the privileges, and we cannot have the privileges unless we manfully bear the responsibility. Thus as soon as the Jewish people ceased to be a missionary people,

the Jewish people ceased to be an interpretation of God to the world. They lost their election, which was to national responsibility. They themselves knew that the spirit of prophecy had died among them. They felt they had no open vision, and so had no message. From the older prophets of action to the later prophets of deed and word there had been a constant interpretation of God's word to the world around, but so soon as prophecy had died, the Jewish people ceased to have meaning. Now, unless the spirit of prophecy can be awakened, unless they recognize that they were only the mouthpiece of Jehovah, they are to be no longer a people. When they rejected that which was offered them, and stoned those that were sent unto them, then Jehovah said, "Away with them!" and Jerusalem perished from the earth; a prophetic people without a message was absurd.

But the idea of the divine kingdom did not perish with the Jewish nation. The idea of a divine kingdom, a God-kingdom, is the promise of God to all the nations of the earth, and it is not lost in the ruins of Jerusalem. It was revived in the resurrection of Christ; and we all as Christians are to look forward to the time when all flesh shall *see* the salvation of God.

"Seeing is believing," the old proverb says. But Christ says, "Blessed are they who have not seen, but yet have believed." There was very gross materialism in the make-up of Thomas when he needed to put his hands actually upon the wounds to be convinced that Christ was risen from the dead. A fine spiritual insight, such as that of Paul in his later career, would have needed no such handling of evidence. Christ resurrected was ever with him; Christ was in his life. Henceforth he did

not even want to know Christ "after the flesh" if only spiritual vision remained.

"Blessed are they that have not seen, but yet have believed." We look forward to a kingdom. We may never see it, but there is no reason why it should not be real for all that, so real to our life, so real to our hope and to our wish, so real to our feelings and to our hearts, that it becomes a reality in the great life about us. The things of time may pass away, but that kingdom we have seen, and no man can rob us of it. You might go to the poet and tell him there was no beauty, that you had examined all the images he produced in his poetry, you had analyzed them, and had found that they were a strange mixture of the commonplace things round about us; they were not beauty, the beauty was but the imagination, and that it was often in the way of real life. The poet knows better. The artist knows better.

Every man that is touched with the artist's life, every man to whom the poet speaks, knows that beauty is a real thing; that not chemistry nor mathematics has truths more powerful or lasting than these realities that give temper to life, and beauty and glory to the thought of man.

"All flesh shall see the salvation of God." For this prophet I suppose that refers to the terrible time when men shall be compelled to acknowledge the power of God against their wills. But we ought not to be waiting for that time. Should we wait for the time when we shall be compelled to acknowledge against our wills that God is not only omnipotent, but that his kingdom is to be the kingdom of his Christ? We ought to be so filled with the faith of the salvation of our God, so very confident in our hearts that his kingdom is a reality, and that we are his children and subjects, that we can

enter now into that kingdom in joy and peace.

What is salvation? What do you mean when you speak of God's salvation? What does the pulpit mean when it comes to you and asks if you will accept salvation? Is it conduct? Some have so defined it. A very thoughtful school of Unitarians in New England, in natural and wholesome reaction against the metaphysical subtilties of a certain doctrinal teaching, said, "Salvation has nothing to do with opinion whatsover. It consists in conduct." But the generalization is as faulty as the one attacked. Salvation is not conduct. Salvation is not character. Salvation results in conduct, results in character. Salvation is no more conduct or character than it is belief. Salvation is not opinion, it is not belief. *It is divine life.* The salvation of God is the touch of the divine spirit with his world that brings into it light

and life, that changes conduct, that changes habit, that changes opinion, that changes social organization, that produces revolution and evolution out of which is to come the glory and beauty of the second incarnation of Jehovah here on earth. Salvation is this touch, this precious contact of the soul with Christ, that contact which sooner or later produces the effects which that life needs. Look at those who came in contact with Christ, — for instance, Nicodemus, the hair-splitting, intelligent, refined Pharisee, wondering what this new teaching was that stirred his heart in some way that the old teaching had not done. He was hungry, as many to-day are hungry, for something more than opinions. He went there to find out what was this new teaching, and Christ did not give him a new theology, he did not change his belief, he did not say to him that he must leave all his old traditions and accept

him as teacher. What he did was to infuse into the old teaching new life. He said: "All these old traditions must be born again in heaven. Into this past must be breathed the word of God. Into your life must come new life." How does it come? I do not know that Christ ever answered that question, because it was already answered. Nicodemus had come to Christ, and in that personal contact and submission to Christ as teacher had found a salvation which I have no doubt at last changed his conduct and belief. But it did not begin with that, it only ended with that. Take the woman who came to Christ as he sat weary and worn by the well in Samaria. The poor woman seems to have been densely ignorant, to have had her mind filled with the crudest of teaching, the vulgar superstitions which had found their greatest strength, as always, in the sectarian animosities between them and the Jews.

Christ does not speak to her as he spoke to the Pharisee. He puts his finger upon the weak spot in her life, which had been on a plane she herself knew to be poor and mean and unholy. Christ gave her no new ethical code, but contact with purity, holiness, and peace brings out in the woman's darkened mind the question which Christ ever asks and which seems scarcely answered, because in the personal contact with Christ she found the answer. "He told me all things whatsoever I did." Here was somebody she could submit to, here was a healer of her ethical wounds, here was a purifier; the woman was saved by contact.

There was Zaccheus, whose life seems to have been fairly right as to conduct, but it lacked something. He climbed into a tree out of mere curiosity, the world thought, to see Christ. But Christ knew there was something deeper in his heart, and he says, "I shall sup with

you," and in that personal contact, Zaccheus finds the thing he needs; a relationship is established between himself and a spiritual righteousness, and out of this relationship springs a new conduct, a changed belief. And out of this relationship and this contact, shall spring a changed social organization, a changed life, a new kingdom of God, when all flesh shall see the salvation of God.

No one of us surely has been without in his life some personal contact which has helped and elevated and lifted him up. We have felt the power of men with whom we did not agree, men whose intellectual life possibly we felt was far below our own, men whom in many ways we could not always admire, but they had something that we had not, and personal contact with them helped us, gave us nobler views of life, stirred us to new thoughts, made us more ambitious for the future both of ourselves and those

about us. We have felt the power of personal contact, because we have come face to face with men whom we admired; but how with Christ? We cannot come in contact surely with Christ, for he has passed away. If only we could walk with him, if only we could see him, if only our hands could touch him, that personal contact would mean for us perchance what it meant to many of the disciples; but he has passed away, and with him there has passed a glory from this earth and forever! No, dear friends, that contact is possible now and to-day and forever. It is that personal contact, that personal relationship, which is the real spiritual life of the community to-day. Under all the passing forms of doctrine and creed the real power is this personal indwelling life.

Where is Christ? "I am with you always." Where? "Everywhere." There is no reason why your life may not come

in contact with Christ if only you will seek him. He seeks you, if only you will be sought. Christ is ever willing to make you *see* his salvation that you may so walk and never miss it again, never wander again in the mists and darkness which have sometimes come over your life. I do not know what you think your life needs, but it needs everything if you have not found Christ. It is sometimes in moments of business depression, sometimes in moments of darkest sorrow that Christ makes himself most felt, because Christ came to the lost, he came to the suffering, he came to the sorry of heart. It was not to the contented, the self-righteous, he came, but to those who needed him. And it is in the moments when our hearts are bowed down that we most feel the need of Christ and our hearts go out to him. When your life is restless and discontented, when you feel that your life needs something, some

purpose, some direction, some guidance, it is in such a moment that Christ is nearest to you, reaching out his hand to you and telling you that he will be your teacher, your helper, your guide, he will be to you what you need him to be to you. It may be that your opinions do not need changing. You may have been well brought up. Your opinions may be so far different from your way of life that to change your opinions would not change your life. Then it will not be your opinions that Christ will change first. It may not be your conduct. Your conduct may be outwardly what the world will call moral, what you yourself regard as fairly satisfactory. You may have been able to keep your life fairly clean, fairly pure, but what does it need? If your conduct needs life Christ will give it. On one of the great estates of England the passing traveller is shown an artificial tree, wonderfully painted to imi-

tate the natural branches, but made of unyielding iron. At a little distance the eye may be deceived, but only for a little, and the second impression is one of disappointment and ugliness, for there is no life there. Far more beautiful are the little shrubs that grow about the grounds, that will never reach the stateliness of the imitation tree, but which have within them the life that forms anew each spring the glowing freshness of their green. What is your morality? Come to Christ that he may breathe into it the life that will grow into his beauty, sloughing off the old branches that there may be new life, new glory, new beauty, that there may be life born of God and quickened by his Spirit.

Where shall you come to him that you may see him? You do not require to go to seek him, he is everywhere. Some have told me where they found Christ. One in the bow of an ocean steamer,

where he had crawled one stormy night, having coaxed the sailor to let him stay there. There, as he looked out into the darkness of the storm, he found Christ. It was not in the hush, it was not in the storm, nor in the still small voice, it was simply in the touch of that spirit with spirit. He went back tempted to believe it was his imagination playing upon him, but felt as the day went by and night followed day, that Christ had really been with him in the midst of the stormy wave. He found Christ, and in contact and touch his life was made new. Amidst the business of Wall Street, amidst the tramp of many feet, amidst the plunging rush after gold and success, a man walked down that street burdened with the cares of the world and of life. Just as he reached the door of the shop the bell of Trinity struck one, and to his soul it was the voice of Christ calling him from shame into a new life, into a

new happiness and a new hope. It may be in the hush of sacrifice, when we worship together at the feet of Christ, that you have come in scarcely knowing if you believe or if you believe not. Christ was there, loving, pleading, lifting up, ever saying, "My peace I give unto you. Not as the world gives, give I unto you. Let not your hearts be troubled," and in that touch you have felt the salvation of our God. And then, if you are true, you will go out and let that salvation be seen. Men may not possibly be interested in your opinions, they will look at your conduct, they will look at your life. Your conduct may not bear marked progress at first, but in the spirit in which you hold your opinions, the spirit in which you go about your daily duties, in the new inspiration for righteousness, holiness, and truth, you will show to the world around the salvation of our God,—that Christ is a reality, that he still speaks

to men, that his touch is still felt; and men will know, even if they do not confess it, that you have something of good, that life is more than they have made it, that God is still in his world, is still teaching men, and "all flesh shall see the salvation of our God."

Let us avoid one mistake as we try to make that salvation seen, — the mistake of the exclusive spirit of infidelity. This infidelity thinks Jehovah is going to take out one here and one there from a great number, and transfer them into his kingdom. That is not election. Election is not the arbitrary, sovereign act of Jehovah, going here and there and taking out one to transfer into his kingdom. Election is the choosing in God's sovereign grace of you and of me to be his instruments in making his salvation seen. And if we will make our calling and election sure, then we are to make that salvation show, — show in business, show

in politics, show in our life, show in our national life. We are chosen to responsibilities, to contact with Christ, that he may have contact with the world through us, — Christ in us speaking to men, telling men that there is a judgment seat, and a righteousness, that there is an infinite and tender forgiveness, and the yearning of the All Father for the hearts of his wandering children. "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."

The kingdom of God is coming through us if we are faithful; a prophetic, sacrificial, and kingly Church is yet to rule this world's destiny. The voice is now crying in the wilderness. Christ is coming in power, the power of divine indwelling love. He is to make all things new. Now, organized Christianity actually obscures for some the vision of the Christ. Doctrinal discus-

sion, sectarian strife, unholy zeal, are the mountains to be moved, as well as atheism, materialism, and agnosticism. And the reign of Christ is to be a personal reign, for no other kind of reign would be of any use, just as no other kind of contact than personal contact is salvation. The Church is to be the Temple of the living God; its message the voice of the indwelling Christ.

"All flesh shall see the salvation of God." Are you trusting in that salvation? Are you making it seen? Do men feel it in the touch of your handclasp, in the way in which you do your business, in the way in which you draw up your contracts, in the way in which you argue your cases in court, in the way in which you live in society, in the way in which you do the little deeds of kindness that come naturally to your heart? Are men seeing the salvation of our God, and attributing it to Christ? Are men seeing

that salvation because they see your life sweet, lifted up, ennobled, purified, righteous? Then we do not need to wait for the coming of Christ; he has come. He has come in our hearts, he has come in his Church. And when all Christian men so live, the Church will be a real incarnation, — the glory and beauty of his countenance, and "all flesh shall see the salvation of our God." God's salvation and the needs of the world are one. All flesh shall bow at the name of Jesus, and we shall have no need any more to say one to another, "Know Jehovah," for all shall know him from the least even unto the greatest. We shall joy in our salvation, for "all flesh shall see the salvation of God," and shall feel forever and forever the touch of God's infinite love. May he grant it!

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